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ABSTRACT

The report presents findings and recommendations from a 1996 statewide study of the adult education needs of limited-English-proficient (LEP) adults in California, designed to help in planning and policy initiatives. The study explores three broad areas of concern: patterns of need (the extent of services needed by the LEP population, by county and linguistic background); learning needs and objectives (skill development needs, methods for assessing them, and strategies for assessing service outcomes); and systems responsiveness (the adequacy of current state response). Data were gathered from existing sources and field research in three representative communities in diverse geographic areas. The report outlines 22 specific action recommendations in four areas of effort: improved resource mobilization and rational resource allocation; realignment of program mission and guidelines to increase responsiveness and accountability; continued efforts in staff and organizational development; and applied research, planning, and collaborative service delivery initiatives. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Responding to Diversity:

Strategies and Initiatives to Support Lifelong Learning for Limited English Adults in California

by
Edward Kissam and Stephen Reder

Aguirre International

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Edward Kissam and Stephen Reder

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contract 5405
"Statewide Assessment of Special Needs
of Limited English-proficient Adults"

Submitted to
Adult Education and Planning Unit
California Department of Education

Aguirre International
April, 1997

Executive Summary

Research Objectives

This report presents the findings and recommendations from a 1996 statewide study of the adult education needs of limited English-proficient (LEP) adults in California conducted. for the California Department of Education. Adult education instruction provided to LEP adults accounts for more than $175 million of state and federal expenditures each year. Thus, the research was designed to provide a sound basis for planning and policy initiatives to assure LEP adults' equitable access to quality adult education services and to increase the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of those services.

The study explores three broad areas of shared concern among policymakers, planners, program administrators, adult education practitioners, and legislators. They are the following:

Patterns of Need The first research area consists of quantitative estimates of the extent of service need among LEP adults and county-by-county variations in the number, and linguistic composition of California's LEP population. This analysis yields critical data which provide a foundation for systematic allocation of adult education funding resources and for guiding local program planning to configure services to respond to the extraordinary diversity of California's LEP population.

Learning Needs and Objectives The second, and most critical, research objective was to better understand LEP adults' learning needs so as to improve service quality and cost-effectiveness. If LEP adult learners could be served better and faster, even with constraints on system capacity, it would be possible to respond to more of those in need. As legislative and public demand for solid data on the impacts of social program investments increases, improved data on skills development needs, methods for assessing those needs, and strategies for meaningfully assessing service outcomes will become critical.

System Responsiveness The final research area addressed in this study relates to the adequacy of the California adult education system's current response to LEP adults' needs. A full-scale evaluation was, however, well beyond the mandate and scope of this study. Thus, the study provides preliminary findings, focused primarily on issues of customer satisfaction and service access. The study presents a comprehensive set of recommendations to increase the versatility, service quality, and cost-effectiveness of the adult education system.

Methodology

The study requirements were for research to be completed and reported to the California Department of Education by December, 1996. To accomplish this, Aguirre International adopted a research design which combined analysis of statewide extant data with field research in three communities chosen to represent, within the constraints of study budget and schedule, the geographical diversity of California.

The case study areas where field research took place are: Long Beach (chosen to represent urban areas of Southern California with large numbers of immigrants), Redwood City (San Francisco Bay Area), and Sanger/Fresno (rural Central California). In these

areas, the study team conducted household surveys of limited English-proficient Latinos. We also conducted focus groups with potential and current adult education clients from major language groups. These focus groups included Cambodians and Latinos in Long Beach; Hmong and Latinos in Sanger/Fresno; and Latinos in Redwood City.

Based on our review of the literature, extant data, and field research in case study communities, the study team presents 22 specific action recommendations in four separate areas of effort:

- Improved resource mobilization and rational allocation of resources
- Realignment of program mission and guidelines to increase responsiveness and accountability
- Continued efforts in staff and organizational development
- Applied research, planning, and collaborative service delivery initiatives

Findings and Recommendations

Here we report the major findings and specific recommendations from the current study.

Extent of Service Need and Distribution of California's LEP Population

A fundamental requirement for systematic program planning and policy analysis relates to the "universe of need" for services and the patterns of service demand within a state as large and diverse as California. **Chapter 1** of the current study examines the size, overall characteristics, and distribution of California's LEP population, using extant data sources. This analysis provides the basis for recommendations regarding resource mobilization, service planning, and systematic allocation of resources to respond equitably to LEP adults' needs.

The "core" population of LEP adults in need of adult education services numbers about 2.7 million.

The "core" LEP service population consists of persons whose English is limited and who have less than a high school diploma or less than 12 years of schooling in their country of origin. This estimate provides the most conservative measure of the "universe of need" for adult education services. This core numbered approximately 2.7 million persons as of January 1, 1997. At the turn of the century, this "universe of need" will have increased to approximately 3.2 million persons.

State Adult Literacy Survey (SALS) data show that large numbers of persons with 12 or more years of schooling experience functional literacy problems and that the size of the LEP population who might need "targeted" skills improvement is even larger than that of the "core" service population. In 1990 when the survey took place, about 2.2 million California adults were limited in <u>understanding</u> English; 2.4 million had substantial difficulties in <u>speaking</u> English, 2.8 million in reading English, and 3.6 million in <u>writing</u> in English. Thus, the full extent of adult learning needs among LEP adults may be as much as 65% larger than the "core" population.

LEP adults make up about two-fifths of the total population of California adults whose functional literacy is at a level where skills development would be needed to allow them to cope easily with the everyday literacy demands they face. Their service needs include not only the need to learn English but also basic skills improvement needs.

As many as 2 million LEP adults may need specialized assistance from the adult education system in order to secure citizenship.

Between 1.8 million and 2.2 million of California's legal immigrants are LEP adults who have not yet been naturalized and who may need adult education services to help them fulfill the English-language or citizenship knowledge requirements of naturalization. Actual demand for ESL/citizenship services will, of course, depend on the proportion of eligible legal immigrants who decide to seek citizenship. A sub-group with particularly urgent need for adult education services are naturalization applicants whose citizenship is held up because they could not satisfy the English-language requirements of an INS examiner. Another 780,000 legal immigrants who become eligible to apply for citizenship over the four-year period from 1997-2000 may need ESL/citizenship assistance in the future.

Standard classroom instruction strategies are not well-suited to the specific needs of some sub-groups of naturalization applicants in need of assistance, particularly those who are elderly or those who have little or no schooling and minimal contact with English-speaking Californians.

The "core" service population of LEP adults is not distributed evenly throughout California.

Approximately half of the LEP core service population (49%) resides in Los Angeles County. Another 17% reside in contiguous areas of urban Southern California, in San Bernardino, Orange, and San Diego Counties. Another 13% reside in the urban San Francisco Bay area, in Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties. The remaining one-fifth of the LEP population is concentrated primarily in rural and ex-urban areas with high levels of agricultural production.

California's farmworkers are an important sub-population of LEP adults. Although the overwhelming majority of the LEP core service population is urban, the highest concentrations of LEP adults (i.e., as percentage of potential adult education clients) are to be found in rural counties. Major rural counties for LEP services include: Fresno, Tulare, Madera, Monterey, and Imperial.

Detailed county-by-county mapping of the density gradients of LEP adults can be found in **Chapter 1** of the full report.

The distribution of California's LEP population is shifting as immigrants diffuse from established immigrant-receiving areas into new parts of the state.

Using the California Department of Education's data on the home language of children enrolled in the K-12 system, the study examined the changing distribution of LEP adults in the state from 1990 through 1995.[1] Several regions which have, in the past, had

[1] The 1990 decennial census provides baseline population data for virtually all planning, e.g., Department of Finance projections and projections by individual agencies. The Home Language Survey provides an

relatively few LEP adults now face especially rapid increases in the numbers of LEP adults. The rate of increase in LEP population is these "new" immigrant areas of the state is an important planning consideration because it is in these areas where the current service delivery system may most need to be expanded or re-configured to meet growing service demand.

Urban counties with particularly high annual rates of LEP service population growth include San Bernardino (6.3%) and Sacramento (6.7%). The rural counties with the highest rates of growth are those of the northern Sacramento Valley--Sutter, Colusa, Yuba, Butte--all of which have annual growth rates over 6%. Two counties of mixed rural-urban character--Marin (8.3%) and Placer (9.2%)--have the highest LEP growth rates in the state, probably due to extensive local reliance on an immigrant labor force. County-by-county estimates of LEP growth are detailed in Chapter 1 of the full report.

Spanish is the primary language of more than four-fifths of the LEP "core" service population.

The overwhelming majority of California's LEP "core" service population are Spanish-speakers. This suggests that service efficacy will be improved if local adult education programs in predominantly Latino communities develop specialized instructional designs which are responsive to the characteristic needs of Latinos rather than relying on a "one size fits all" service model.

Speakers of Chinese (aggregating all dialects) are the second largest language group, making up 6% of the population, followed by Vietnamese speakers who make up 2% of the population. No other single language group makes up more than 1% of the LEP population. In areas where there are dense concentrations of language minorities, e.g., Cambodians in Long Beach, Vietnamese in San Jose, Hmong in Fresno, Chinese in San Francisco, Alameda, and the San Bernardino counties, the development of specialized program designs and instructional services is also feasible and desirable.

The low numbers of LEP adults speaking languages other than Spanish in many areas of the state mean that it will be difficult for programs to customize their services to meet the needs of these language minorities. However, use of individualized tutoring, dissemination of audio instructional materials, and support for computer-based self-directed learning may be promising strategies for responding to diversity in these areas.

Study Implications for Resource Mobilization and Allocation

The data and analytic techniques now available to policymakers and program planners make it possible to develop reliable measures of the need for adult education services on a county-by-county basis. This data framework can be enhanced by systematic planning at the local level, using a variety of applied research techniques to guide local efforts to configure the menu of available services to respond more effectively to the needs of the adult education service population. The traditional model of informal course planning based on adult school administrators' knowledge of their communities cannot substitute for systematic exploration of the nature of service demand.

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imperfect but unique source of data for tracking shifts in the distribution LEP population. 1995 is the last year for which these data have been tabulated.

California should seek to rationalize its allocation of funding for adult education services.

The most important implication of the analysis of the distribution of the LEP "core" service population in California is that there is a critical need to rationalize and realign state apportionment funding for adult education. Currently, there is virtually no relationship between the funding allocation for a given area and the universe of need for services--for LEP adults or any population of adult education clients. Rational allocation of resources is needed to assure that available resources are used efficiently and effectively. Where resources exceed service demand, there are few incentives to use available resources efficiently. Where demand vastly outstrips available resources, service quality inevitably suffers as providers struggle constantly to do more for less.

Adult education funding mechanisms should be developed to present greater incentives for service delivery system improvement and to encourage service provider responsiveness to emerging skills development needs.

Adult education programs are called upon to respond to a wide range of needs, particularly in serving LEP adults. Systematic analysis of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of California's LEP population can provide a solid empirical foundation for crafting targeted funding initiatives which provide special incentives to encourage service providers to respond to emerging needs such as ESL/citizenship instruction and the challenges of welfare reform.

This type of targeted incentive-oriented funding must be tied to provider performance as measured by learner outcomes. The bottom line for naturalization applicants, for example, is whether an INS examiner deems them to have a basic command day-to-day English, not a certificate of hours of "seat time." The bottom line for welfare recipients reaching the end of time-limited support is whether they, in fact, have the basic skills to succeed in vocational training or secure stable employment.

Although the demand for adult education services greatly exceeds system capacity throughout California, the study encountered little evidence that local adult schools were moving proactively to secure additional resources to support increases in service capacity or quality. Potential sources of support include local businesses, other programs which might have a stake in the outcomes from adult education programs, or volunteers who simply seek to help others in their community. The optimal strategy for leveraging resources is to reward service providers who "go the extra mile" to leverage new resources rather than to institute a mandatory matching requirement because some communities, particularly in rural areas, do not have the economic base to secure matching funds.

Use of ADA as the basis for funding adult education services must be re-examined in order to provide incentives for re-engineering the service delivery system to better respond to the needs of LEP adults and increase system cost-effectiveness.

The current funding system serves to discourage adoption of instructional methodologies other than classroom instruction. This, in turn, severely constrains the adult education system's ability to increase service quality and adopt the mix of instructional modalities and services needed to support lifelong learning. Alternative approaches to funding provision of adult education services are a critical element in building a service delivery system which is more flexible, which responds more effectively to individual learners' needs, and which is committed to "world-class" service quality. Without

additional flexibility and an expanded menu of services to offer to LEP adults, efforts to achieve increase service effectiveness will be seriously hampered.

A systematic and phased shift to performance-based accountability will, eventually, require attention to funding incentives and disincentives in any case. Therefore, the ideal course for the legislature and the California Department of Education would be to be proactive and initiate the strategic planning efforts needed to accomplish such a major shift in the legislative and regulatory framework for provision of adult education services.

Demand for Adult Education Services

The optimal deployment of resources is to invest in developing only the service capacity needed to meet demand. Developing "just enough" system capacity to meet demand makes it possible to devote more resources to investing in service quality improvement. Therefore, the current study explored the extent to which LEP adults who clearly needed adult education services would, in fact, seek those services. This provides a basis for ballpark estimates of what actual "market demand" for services might be.

Approximately one-third of California's LEP population is firmly interested in seeking adult education services in the foreseeable future.

One-third (33%) of Spanish-speaking household survey respondents said that they planned to pursue some sort of adult learning objective in the next year, or in the next 2-3 years. Focus group discussions suggest that a similar proportion of LEP adults from other language groups are actively interested in enrolling in an adult learning program.

The overwhelming majority of the remaining LEP adults "don't know for sure" whether they would like to enroll in an adult learning program. The plans of this large group of "uncertain" potential adult education students may change as their life circumstances change (e.g., when child care responsibilities are less, when seeking a new job). Predictably, the leading barriers to enrollment were work and child care responsibilities. Transportation was not generally considered to be a problem. Demand among these "uncertain" potential students is likely to be relatively elastic and respond to "customer" perceptions about quality of service as well as changes in personal circumstances.

An important related finding is that demand for services varies greatly from community to community. In Sanger, for example, almost half (47%) of respondents to the study's Spanish-speaking Household Survey (SSHS) had plans to engage in adult learning while only one-quarter of the Redwood City (23%) and Long Beach (27%) respondents were interested. These community-to-community variations in potential demand for adult education services reflect not only differences in the profile of the LEP population in each community but, also, labor market factors. This serves to highlight the need for system flexibility and careful local planning to respond to local needs.

LEP adults are generally aware of adult school programs in their community and consider adult schools accessible. The most important constraint on service access stems from potential students' concerns about the types and quality of learning opportunities available.

California's adult schools are physically accessible to LEP adults and at least one school among those in our case study communities, Long Beach Adult School, had been

creative and proactive in designing innovative service delivery arrangements to facilitate LEP adults' access.

About three-quarters (73%) of Spanish-speaking household survey respondents, and even greater proportions of Hmong and Cambodian focus groups, were aware of a local adult school. However, many did not know much about adult schools. For example, almost nine out of ten respondents (88%) knew about the local adult school's ESL program, but less than half (45%) knew about the availability of citizenship classes. Most, but not all, Spanish-speaking LEP adults we surveyed who had, at some point, enrolled in an adult school program were very happy with their experience. Cambodian and Latino focus group participants had similar experiences; however, Hmong focus group participants were generally displeased with their adult school experience.

Focus group discussions with Latino, Hmong, and Cambodian adult education students and non-students showed substantial disagreement within each group about the quality of service provided by adult schools. Because, the primary way in which LEP adults hear of adult schools is via word of mouth from relatives and friends, "customer" satisfaction can be expected to play an important role in potential students' decisions to enroll in an adult learning program or not. While adult education services are free, the low-income adults who make up the overwhelming majority of the LEP service population incur substantial opportunity costs if they take time from work, looking for work, or child care to attend an adult school program.

Strategies to Broaden Learning Options

The study explored the feasibility of alternatives to classroom instruction as a way to facilitate LEP adults' access to service, broaden learning options, and to support lifelong self-directed learning. The study also explored alternatives to the typical adult school schedule of 2-3 evening classes per week. These options deserve careful attention as elements in a strategy to increase service effectiveness and accessibility.

The key principle is that efforts to increase service access and improve service quality need to give greater attention to the full continuum of potential learning modalities and focus on developing a system which allow multiple modes for participating in adult learning programs. Increasing the diversity of available adult learning modalities is a crucial element in developing an adult education system to support lifelong learning. Options are discussed in detail in **Chapter 3** of the full report.

No single instructional design is likely to meet the needs of all LEP adult learners

The traditional schedule of 2-3 evening classes per week is popular but at least two alternative scheduling options--intensive 2-day weekend classes and a model combining 1 day/week of peer-group study with instructor consultation on a flexible schedule--were considered attractive by at least half the Spanish-speaking survey respondents. A similar proportion of the LEP population considers study circles and volunteer-based learning programs to be appealing options. Women with children were particularly interested in instructional designs which would allow them to learn English in informal settings (e.g., in conjunction with Head Start).

This highlights the utility of supplementing the traditional classroom "evening school" service delivery system with a more flexible menu of learning modalities, including alternative class scheduling patterns, peer-based "study circles," volunteer-based learning

programs, and distance learning. Because the attractiveness of each option is likely to vary greatly among different LEP sub-groups, local "market research" via focus groups has the potential of providing crucial information to program planners for the purpose of re-configuring the local service delivery system to best respond to local needs. Similar focus group techniques could be used, subsequently, to fine tune new instructional designs.

Increasing the menu of adult learning options is a critical element in efforts to develop a service delivery system which will support lifelong learning and achieve increased cost-effectiveness.

Some distance-learning strategies have promise but LEP adults are much more interested in access to videocassette, audiocassette, and computer-based instruction than broadcast television or radio.

Broadcast-based distance learning has little appeal to LEP adults. The reality is that, in crowded households with large families, neither radio nor television is considered an appropriate learning medium. The most popular instructional modality is videocassette; more than three-quarters (77%) of Spanish-speaking LEP adults said they would definitely borrow such materials if they were made available. More than half (55%) said they would definitely borrow audiocassette-based materials. Almost two-thirds (63%) said they thought computer-based instructional programs were a good way to learn. In discussing places where computer-based learning materials could be located to facilitate access, the most popular option was libraries, followed by elementary schools and high schools.

The Full Spectrum of LEP Adults' Learning Needs

The study conducted a comprehensive examination of LEP adults' learning needs. This research is reported in **Chapters 3** and **4** of the full report. The field survey research asked respondents to rate their ability to respond to the demands they faced in everyday life--in the workplace, in family interactions, as part of participating in community life, and in the course of their efforts to develop new skills and learn new information. The findings from this research indicate that it will be crucial for adult education to reconsider its mission so as to better align services to respond to the real-world skills demands placed on LEP adults.

One of the most important overall themes to emerge from the in-depth examination of LEP adults' learning needs is that their primary need is not for "survival" English but, rather, for comprehensive educational services designed to build their mobility in California society. Although many of the LEP adults contacted in the study (in both the survey of Spanish-speaking households and Cambodian, Hmong, and Latino focus groups) said they were able to function well in the current environment in which they lived, very few felt they would be able to function effectively in the English-language environment of mainstream California society. Learning English is an important priority; but, for many, the idea of "learning English" is really a metaphor for an across-the-board drive to achieve facility in a wide range of social and economic interactions.

Because adult learning needs of California's LEP adults do not hinge on day-to-day survival but, rather, on achieving social, economic, and political equity, adult education must recognize that the challenge it confronts is not simply to "remediate" easily recognized and described basic skills deficiencies. Instead, the adult education system must provide a solid foundation for integrating limited-English adults, both foreign-born and native-born, into the mainstream of California society.

"Illiteracy" can no longer be treated as a form of relatively uncommon social pathology experienced only by "marginal" populations but, rather, as a common and inevitable consequence of the cultural and linguistic diversity of California's population and the rapidly-escalating volume and complexity of information which confronts Californians. The current system of adult education which was designed to confront a monolithic problem of "illiteracy" must be reconfigured to respond to the demands of a multilingual, multicultural, information-based 21st century society. Failure to respond to this challenge will serve to perpetuate the existence of a segmented labor market, a social and educational environment in which families experience lifelong disadvantages due to limitations on their ability to acquire and analyze crucial information, and communities fragmented along ethnic, linguistic, and educational "fault lines."

LEP Adults' Learning Needs in Different Domains of Daily Life

Many LEP adults report some facility in dealing with the demands of daily life in the communities where they live, most of which are immigrant enclaves. However, while many can "get by" in the immigrant enclave in which they live, few feel they have the skills they need to get ahead or to deal with the more challenging aspects of life in California. Fewer than one in ten feels confident that they can function adequately in an English-only environment. Lack of English-language skills was considered particularly serious as a constraint on participating in community affairs. Building communication skills in English and basic skills for acquiring, analyzing, interpreting, and making informed decisions are a pressing long-term need.

Workplace Skills While most LEP adults (66%) feel they have the skills they need to do the work they are now doing, their current skills do not permit them upward career mobility or the ability to move into a new occupational area. Even in their current work environment -- usually a low-wage "low skill" occupation -- more than half (53%) have some problems in communicating with their supervisor or employer

Family Life In their current situation, only half of LEP adults feel confident that they can deal well with the routine tasks placed on them as part of family life in a complex society. Important tasks in this area include: money management, giving advice to family members on the issues they confront, communicating with children's teachers, neighbors, and storekeepers. Getting help to deal with health, housing, or similar issues is a particular problem area with two-fifths of survey respondents saying they cannot deal "very well or "at all" with getting help.

Community Life Very few LEP adults feel empowered to participate fully in California community life. Only one-third (34%) feel they are able to join with friends and neighbors to have a say about how organizations respond to their needs. Only one quarter (25%) feel they are prepared to understand the community issues they hear about, see in the newspaper or vote on. An equally small proportion (26%) feel confident they can communicate their opinion to local, state, or federal representatives. In an English-only environment, less than 5% feel able to participate meaningfully in community life.

Lifelong Learning Only half of the LEP adults we interviewed felt they were adequately prepared to participate and succeed in a program to: 1) learn a new trade or occupation, 2) to use magazines, manual, or books to find out the information they needed in daily life, or 3) to make informed choices about their careers, education, or "getting ahead." Only one-quarter felt adequately prepared to use resources such as libraries or computer-based information systems to get the information they needed.

Varying Patterns of Skills Development Needs

The study's analysis of different immigrant cohorts' self-assessed functional skills sheds further light on the overall profile of LEP adults' needs. While the research literature shows that immigrants' English language facility increases with time in the United States, the LEP adults interviewed in the current study who had lived longest in the United States (20 years or more) do not feel any more confident of their ability to function effectively in any of the four domains of community life than recent arrivals (0-9 years in the U.S.). This suggests that linguistic and social isolation, combined with educational disadvantage, have "stalled" their ability to integrate themselves into California society. At the same time, their expectations and aspirations may have increased relative to the most recent immigrants.

Analyses of the patterns of need among key sub-groups within the LEP population--men and women, those with little versus those with some prior post-elementary schooling--show that the learning needs of these sub-groups are significantly different. One of the most important study findings is that low levels of schooling interact with English-language limitations to seriously constrain individuals' ability to function in different domains of everyday life, most notably in the workplace and in pursuing a course of lifelong learning. The study also suggests the need to focus on the special needs of women who have little schooling. Detailed findings on patterns of need among sub-groups are reported in **Chapter 4** of the study.

New perspectives on LEP Adults' Learning Needs: Implications for Policy and Planning

The study findings about the types of learning needs experienced by LEP adults strongly suggest the need for instructional designs focused on comprehensive skills development and configured to catalyze and support lifelong learning through a mixture of participation in formal, structured programs, counseling, coaching, support for self-directed learning, and constant efforts to extend learning beyond the classroom. A crucial challenge is to support LEP learners in their efforts to practice, fine-tune, and mobilize the skills they have begun to acquire in a classroom or other formal learning environment.

A fundamental re-examination of the adult education mission, service delivery system, regulatory/administrative framework, and staff development strategies will be required to bring California's adult education system to a point where it can reliably respond to the needs of its "customers": adult learners, California business, and the general public. In this effort, top priority should be given to service quality improvement. In confronting this task, adult education stakeholders should recognize that the issue of quality service to limited English-proficient adults is central to its mission since LEP adults make up almost half of the entire "universe of need" for basic adult education services and requires a proportional amount of system resources, more than $175 million per year.

The study presents a comprehensive set of recommendations for legislative, administrative, planning and staff development initiatives which would prepare California adult education to better respond to the learning needs of LEP adults. Key recommendations are summarized below.

California should re-examine the framework of 10 legislatively-authorized instructional areas and establish a "comprehensive basic skills" designation for programs designed to develop "high performance" skills in multiple areas. This initiative to support "teaching across the curriculum" should include guidelines, targeted and refocused staff development efforts, and increasing emphasis on outcome-based assessment of program performance.

The current framework of ten legislatively-authorized areas does not correspond well to the real-world learning needs of LEP adults. In particular, the distinctions between "elementary" skills, "secondary" skills, "ESL", and "GED" are anachronistic and serve to encourage a "cookie-cutter" approach to curriculum content and course design. Study survey findings and focus group discussions strongly indicate that "customer" demand is for comprehensive instructional designs oriented toward real-world skills demands; these findings highlight the urgency of efforts sparked by the ground-breaking work of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving the Necessary Skills (SCANS) to articulate a framework for building "high performance" skills.

While the adult education field has, with some justification, felt that legislators and policymakers did not appreciate their accomplishments, there is not yet a clear vision of what a "world-class" adult education system would be or support for meaningful service quality standards. While there is some innovation at the local level, priority has usually been to "do more with less money," not to develop and assure instructional effectiveness. Few of the efforts which do emerge are sustained or systematically evaluated.

Current "model program standards" provide only very weak guidance for efforts to increase instructional quality. The analytic systems currently used to assess incoming LEP adults' "baseline" skills and post-program skills are not adequate to encourage instructional designs which are firmly focused on teaching to support acquisition of the "high performance" social and communication skills all Californians need. Additionally, staff development efforts are not adequately funded or configured to assure that LEP students will have statewide access to consistently high-quality service which will make a difference in their lives.

Legislative and administrative action will be required to address this complex set of issues. However, the first task in carrying out such an initiative will be for administrators, adult school instructors and staff to conscientiously examine California adult education's vision of its own mission. Ideally this effort should be a broad-based and open process including not only those within the adult school system itself, but also, with a major stake in service outcomes: legislators, California businesses, community organizations, immigrant advocates and human service providers working with the same population, and adult learners themselves.

The challenge is to decide whether adult education services to LEP adults will continue to be predicated on efforts to do as well as possible with inadequate resources or whether there will be a commitment to achieving consistent, "world-class" outcomes. Once there is consensus on a clear and well-articulated vision, coordinated funding, administrative, and staff development efforts can be solidly justified as an affordable, and essential, investment in California's human capital.

California must reconfigure the adult education service delivery system to support sustained and even "lifelong" adult learning. To accomplish this, it will be necessary to facilitate adult learners movement through "the system"--beginning with formulation of individualized learning plans, orientation sessions on "learning to learn", and post-program support for self-directed learning.

LEP adults move in and out of the California adult education system so rapidly that it is not clear that this transitory contact with an adult learning program has a significant impact on their lives. There has been virtually no systematic attention to effective ways to move adult learners, into, through, or out of classroom instruction, although course non-completion rates are known to be extremely high.

The traditional commitment to "open entry-open exit" instruction coupled with a laissez-faire "first-come, first-served" access to service creates the mistaken impression that basic skills development is akin to browsing in a library. This ultimately undermines the critical recognition that adult learning is a challenging, time-consuming, and demanding task for adults with little prior experience and success with schooling. Success requires that students and instructional staff alike must work systematically and deliberately toward achieving results. It is crucial to recognize the very substantial "basic skills gap" faced by limited-English adult learners, most of whom are foreign-born and less than half of whom have an elementary school level of schooling, cannot be overcome otherwise.

As currently configured, California's adult education system does serve to provide most LEP adults a "jump start" in building the communication skills, analytic abilities, and knowledge base they will need to live in California. This is a valuable accomplishment but it is sharply at odds with the "official story" that a 13 week course, or even a series of courses, will enable a LEP adult to achieve specific educational objectives and guarantee specific competencies, e.g., the ability to speak English, the ability to successfully undertake a course of vocational training. While California classrooms provide LEP learners with the rewarding experience of participating in a caring "learning community", more deliberate and structured efforts to enhance, extend, and sustain ongoing skills development are needed.

A system designed to support lifelong learning must go beyond "the course" as the basic unit of operations and service management. A new service paradigm, oriented toward preparing LEP adults to discuss their learning needs and aspirations with instructional staff, establish an individualized learning plan, use time spent in the classroom setting effectively, and continue progressing toward achieving their individual objectives is long overdue. A new outcome-oriented service paradigm can dramatically increase service efficacy, once it is recognized that the proper role for adult education is not to "teach", i.e., to provide everything each student needs, but, rather to "support learning", i.e., effectively assist adult learners in building the abilities they need not simply to survive but to prevail in the full range of social interactions they confront.

Implementation of a new service paradigm will require a fundamental reconfiguration of service delivery strategies, system staffing requirements, planning, and program evaluation techniques. The most obvious requirement is for adult schools to establish a counseling infrastructure, staff development resources, and new instructional delivery modes (e.g., distance learning options) to support lifelong learning. The role of the adult school or community-based service provider would, then, evolve beyond the current basic requirements of publishing a course schedule and providing instructors for listed courses. The focus would shift, instead, to the challenge of proactively managing and

supporting adult learners' learning progress--in class and out of class, before entering a classroom and after leaving the classroom.

Legislative and administrative action will be needed to pursue such a service paradigm since current funding based on "class contact hours" does not provide an appropriate structure for funding a system which provides ongoing services such as counseling, distance learning, and individual tutoring. Meaningful action would require moderate funding increases but, at the same time, such funding would greatly increase the overall cost- effectiveness of adult education.

While the vision of a reengineered adult education service delivery system designed to support lifelong learning may appear daunting, it should be observed that a similar "reinvention" of the health care service delivery system has deeply changed the entire society's view of what constitutes "health care" extending care beyond the office visit to become a broad-spectrum set of initiatives resting, in part, on individual responsibility, in part on provider commitment to go beyond the individual "service encounter". Such a redesigned system, while needed by most adult learners, is particularly valuable for LEP adults for whom the education/language skills gap is so large.

California's adult education system should extend the range of learning modalities available to learners. A broad spectrum of learning options promises to improve service responsiveness and increase the cost-effectiveness of service delivery, and support lifelong learning efforts.

There is no empirical evidence that LEP adults' learning needs are best addressed in packages of 100 hours of instruction (the amount of classroom time in a typical course). Redesigning the service delivery system to provide a wider menu of learning options can greatly increase cost-effectiveness by using instructional staff more effectively while, at the same time, increasing responsiveness to adult learners' needs.

For example, weekend orientation courses on "learning to learn" might valuably prepare many motivated LEP adults to pursue a self-directed course of study without taking up valuable classroom space. Initial counseling and dialogue in developing an individualized learning plan might greatly increase service effectiveness by preparing a very limited English-proficient adult with almost no schooling to plan a multi-year learning agenda combining classroom attendance, tutoring, and self-directed study. Post-program assessment and counseling might help students who have done well in class without achieving their personal objectives plan what to do next to meet their needs. Tutoring and individualized support, in conjunction with classroom instruction, might help the very large proportion of LEP learners who now drop out of an adult education class to succeed in their learning endeavors.

Without a broad menu of service options, the adult education system and LEP adults alike are "set up" to fail in achieving meaningful outcomes.

Conclusions

We conclude that a fundamental re-examination of how the adult education system construes and responds to the basic skills development needs of those it serves holds out the promise of greatly improving services to LEP adults and, in fact, other adult learners.

California's LEP adults' needs do not hinge upon acquiring traditional certificates of competency such as the GED or documenting hours of seat time in an ESL classroom

but, rather, toward building their ability to analyze and communicate effectively in an information-rich, interactive social environment. The intellectual agility, self-confidence, and awareness of effective strategies to pursue ongoing, lifelong learning is not a luxury but a necessity in an increasingly complex society. The adult education system, if it is to fulfill its traditional commitment to preparing LEP adults for full participation in the economy and society, must, like other segments of California's post-secondary education system, set high standards of excellence linked to the real-world demands learners face.

Need for adult education services, given the demographic and socioeconomic composition of California's population and the demands of a business environment linked to rapidly-growing demand for services and products in the Pacific Rim region will, inevitably outstrip available program resources. Nonetheless, modest and affordable investments of resources targeted toward increasing service effectiveness and responsiveness will yield tremendous returns for California's limited English-proficient population, their employers, and the communities in which they live.

Re-engineering the current service delivery design to transcend a conceptual model which "reduces" the skills development process to a finite set of simple, curriculum building blocks is essential. It is also feasible; perspectives from contemporary research in cross-cultural anthropology, sociolinguistics, language acquisition, literacy development, and cognitive psychology provide a sound theoretical basis for systematic innovation.

One of the most important implications of this study is that the current move toward adoption of a uniform and challenging framework of standards for educational excellence cannot, by itself, be a solution. The problem relates not simply to the need for standards, appropriate strategies for measuring student achievement, and for assuring performance-based accountability among service providers. Adoption of "world-class" standards for California adult education must be matched with a commitment to re-thinking what adult learning needs are within the 21st century environment and how best to respond to them. Such redesign efforts will, inevitably, need to refine the paradigm of adult education services to rely less on classroom-based models of "stand and deliver" teaching and explore new and innovative strategies. The basic challenge will be to craft program designs which can ignite and sustain educationally-disadvantaged adults' ability to get started learning and keep on learning as part of the texture of their daily lives.

Anything less will serve to perpetuate the existence of a dual-track educational service delivery system which fails to satisfy the needs of its stakeholders: LEP adults, their employers, and the communities in which they live. A prudent response to the challenge of developing an adult education service delivery system which genuinely responds to the needs of LEP and other educationally-disadvantaged adults will require flexibility, risk-taking, and a solid commitment to collaboration from different groups of key players: the legislature, the California Department of Education, adult school administrators, and instructional staff. Increased program funding resources will be needed, but it cannot be assured that they will be used effectively unless there is a concomitant commitment to allocate resources in a systematic and deliberate fashion (not on the current arbitrary baselines established and only slightly modified since the 1970's) and to guarantee taxpayers and adult education learners meaningful service outcomes.

Introduction
Purpose and Organization of the Report

Background and Purpose

In June, 1996, the Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit of the California Department of Education (CDE) requested a statewide assessment of the special needs of limited English-proficient (LEP) adults. The overall purpose of the requested study was to provide a solid basis for future policy decisions and planning for adult education agencies to meet the population's needs "related to their preparation for full participation in the economy and society."

This report presents the findings from Aguirre International's review of the literature and its field research from August through October, 1996 to address the key issues articulated in the CDE request. In structuring the study, Aguirre International reflected CDE's emphasis on the importance of hearing from LEP adults students and those who might be potential adult education students.

Study Research Questions and Organization of the Report

The Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit identified five key research questions which, taken together, provide a systematic framework for future planning and consideration of policy options. It was also requested that the study team make recommendations for responding to the identified special needs of LEP adults.

The first two study questions relate to the macro-level framework for a system response to LEP adults' needs. They are:

1. Where are LEP adults located in California?
2. What are the ten largest LEP populations?

We address these two questions in **Chapter 1**, estimating the "universe of need" for services, as well as the distribution of the LEP adult population most likely to need adult education services. We also report and map the distribution of the ten largest non-English language groups of LEP adults.

The discussion of these macro-level issues also includes an examination of the distribution of two sub-groups for whom adult education services will be particularly important in coming years. One group consists of LEP "at risk" workers (i.e., workers whose employment is unstable due to seasonality or the industrial sector in which they work). The other group consists of LEP public assistance recipients who will be affected by the severe eligibility restrictions or time limitations placed on legal immigrants as California implements the federal welfare reform legislation. We also estimate the numbers of a third special service population -- potential naturalization applicants who might need ESL/Citizenship instruction; we do not however analyze or map their distribution because reliable information on their statewide distribution is not currently available.

The third and fourth study questions relate directly to the issue of LEP adults' needs and system response to those needs:

3. What are the special needs of LEP adults?
4. What are the best methods of assessing their special needs?

In exploring the complex issue of needs we examined three distinct facets of need: a) skills development needs and learning objectives, b) needs related to accessing adult education services and successfully achieving personal learning objectives, and c) the utility of alternative service delivery modalities such as distance-learning, workplace literacy, and volunteer-based programs as system responses to needs.

In **Chapter 2**, we provide an overview of LEP adults' needs in four crucial domains of social functioning: workplace, family life, community life, and lifelong learning. Based on data from our field research we also estimate level of demand for adult education services. This is, we believe, a crucial issue to address because improved estimates of demand provide a basis for strategically balancing investments in three competing areas -- overall service capacity increases, "equalization" of service access, and improvements of service quality.

In **Chapter 3**, we report the findings from our field research which relate to the feasibility of using alternative instructional strategies to expand service capacity,

supplement existing capacity, or to respond to the special learning needs of some subgroups among LEP adults.

In **Chapter 4**, we report findings about the educational needs of several subgroups among the LEP population and discuss the ways in which different dimensions of skills development needs are related to LEP adults' schooling, past experience, and current circumstances. This is an area where we believe it will be particularly important to conduct further research because a clear and detailed understanding of the degree of diversity within California's limited English population is necessary to provide a sound foundation for policy deliberation and effective planning. At the same time, improved understanding of the different facets of LEP adults' learning needs may play a major role in designing improved curricula and enhanced program designs to respond to those needs.

We conclude **Chapter 4** with a discussion of considerations about the best methods for assessing LEP adults' needs. In the context of a state and national shift toward some form of performance-based accountability, the challenging issues relating to reliably and comprehensively assessing LEP learners' educational needs and tracking their learning progress are crucial ones. Given the growing recognition that adult learning is, and must be, a lifelong process, the analytic framework used for assessing learners' progress has important implications for efforts to understand the contribution made by structured programs to this process and determining the "value added" by an adult education service provider.

The final research question of the study relates to the issue of system response to the needs of LEP adults:

5. How well are currently available adult education programs meeting LEP adults' needs?

To answer this question we give attention to both the implications of the macro-level data reported in **Chapter 1** and the findings regarding LEP adults' needs reported in **Chapters 2-4**. This response is congruent with the priorities of California's Strategic Plan for Adult Education which identified access to service and quality of service as two of four primary goals. As articulated in the study requirements, the question as to the adequacy of system response to LEP adults' needs is a secondary concern and, thus, the reported findings should not be construed as a definitive assessment of "how well the

system is doing." Such an assessment is beyond the scope or methodology of the current study.

The time frame and funding available to conduct this study limited the extent to which it was possible to capture the full diversity of California's very large LEP population, as well as our ability to assemble the perspectives of the many dedicated adult education instructors, administrators, and volunteers who serve them. In response to these constraints, we focused our efforts on two objectives.

The first effort was to analyze and map extant data to yield a reliable macro-level picture to provide an empirical basis for considering issues related to funding and allocation of resources. Such analyses can make a valuable contribution to policy debate and statewide planning. However, it is crucial to recognize that the macro-level data are most useful as a complement to thorough and systematic local assessment of community needs particularly in urban areas where many diverse limited English groups are concentrated in a small geographic area.

The second effort consisted of case studies in three quite different communities -- Long Beach, in Los Angeles County; Redwood City, in San Mateo County; and Sanger, in Fresno County -- to explore the issue of limited English adults' needs in the greatest possible depth. Each community case study consisted of:

- review of available research on the community
- analysis of extant data on the community
- a household survey of Spanish-speaking LEP adults
- focus groups with out-of-school and in-school Cambodian, Hmong, and Latino LEP adults
- a focus group with adult school instructors
- interviews with "key informants", community leaders and/or service program staff

The Spanish-Speaking Household Survey (SSHS) conducted in each community is based on a multi-stage probability sample of households in which there was a Spanish-speaking eligible LEP adult (16 years of age or older). It provides unique cross-sectional data on the needs of Latino LEP adults who make up more than four-fifths of California's

overallLEP population. In order to gain insight into the special needs of at least some of the non-Latino LEP adult population, focus groups were conducted with Cambodians in Long Beach and Hmong in Fresno and particular efforts were made to discuss adults' learning needs with community leaders. In addition to the insight they provide into three relatively "typical" communities, the local area case studies provide a model for in-depth community needs assessment which can be used as part of further efforts to understand and respond to the diversity of California's limited English adults.

The current study makes a solid contribution to CDE planning efforts and legislative policy discussion of how best to respond to the adult education needs of LEP adults in California. It should also be recognized as "quick turnaround" exploratory research. Our applied research focus has been oriented primarily toward framing issues for ongoing consideration and a conceptual framework for ongoing systematic and multi-stranded effort to reconfigure California's adult education system to meet the challenges it faces. Thus, we would hope that the study's findings and recommendations will be reviewed and discussed by the full spectrum of stakeholders: by adult education practitioners, immigrant advocates, human service agencies, local community leaders, and CDE planners.

Finally, as part of an effort in participatory democracy, we would hope to see the report's summary conclusions and recommendations considered by some of the most important stakeholders: limited English adults themselves.

Chapter 1

The Distribution of LEP Adults and the Languages They Speak

A. Introduction

The size and diversity of California present a challenge to any human service delivery system, but this challenge is perhaps a greater problem for adult education than for many other distribution systems because the service to be delivered does not consist of a single one-time intervention like a vaccination. Instead, the service provided by adult education is, at least in principle, an intervention which is tailored to be responsive to each individual's unique learning needs, often over a period of time. While the key principle is responsiveness, the practical reality is that any effective service delivery system must, to a substantial degree, anticipate the demands of its "customers" and the range of needs that will be encountered via market research.[1]

There is also a strong policy rationale for attention to the distribution of limited English adults likely to need adult education services. One of the four key elements of California's strategic plan for adult education (AEI, 1989) is a commitment to facilitate access to adult education services by persons needing those services. Consequently, the first research question of the current study, "Where are LEP adults located in California?" is meant to provide the most basic empirical foundation for assuring equitable access to services throughout the state. The closely related question, "What are the languages spoken by the largest groups of LEP adults in California?" can provide useful information for efforts to facilitate each group's access to services, for example, via local or statewide outreach efforts.

Within the context of current planning efforts by CDE, the practical importance of these data on distribution and language characteristics are that: a) they provide a basis for rational allocation of limited funding resources, and b) they provide a basis for configuring

[1] There is some tension between the idea of market research and individual responsiveness. While many adult educators, like operators of general stores, feel that they will "naturally" respond to whatever demand emerges, it is likely that their skillfulness in responding is the result of informally exploring the sorts of needs "out there" in the community. Our presentation of formal planning data in this report is not meant to detract from the value of informal local planning but, rather, to complement it.

the service delivery system so as to respond as effectively and efficiently as possible to learners' needs. In principle, the most cost-effective service delivery system is one which distributes program resources in relation to anticipated demand for services and which has the optimal mix of services.

The first set of analyses in this section explore the size and distribution of the California limited English adult education service population in 1990. The second set of analyses examines the distribution of several key sub-groups among the LEP adult education service population -- different language groups, "at risk" workers employed in low-wage unstable sectors of the labor market, and recipients of public assistance. Finally, we explore how differential growth in the LEP service population from 1990-1995 is changing, and will continue to change, patterns of need for services.

B 1990 Baseline estimates of the numbers of limited English-proficient adults needing services

The baseline analysis of the distribution of the limited English-proficient proficient (LEP) population potentially in need of adult education services is based on 1990 census data.[2] This baseline analysis examines two related, but distinct, facets of the distribution of this population -- numbers of persons presumed to be in need of services (referred to as the "core" population) and the relative proportion of LEP adults in need of adult education services.[3] These analyses, essentially, examine this distribution at the county level.[4]

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[2] By "potentially in need" we mean, essentially, the "target population" for adult education services. In our analyses of Public Use Microdata Set (PUMS) data, as in the overall data analyses being used for the CDE's adult education planning effort (Intili and Kissam, 1996) we define this population as 16 years of age or older, out-of-school, speaking English "not well" or "not at all", with less than a 4-year college education. We discuss the specific details of this construct and, in particular, our identification of a "core" adult education service population within the overall service population below.

[3] Throughout this section, we use table presentations to report quantitative data on population distribution and thematic maps to present "density" data, i.e., prevalence of the target population (LEP) within the general population or within the adult education service population. Mapping presentations are based on unadjusted PUMS data while quantitative presentations include adjustments as described in the text.

[4] In order to identify the LEP population in census data for our analyses of geographic distribution it is necessary to use the 5% sample in which the smallest census geographical unit is the "public use microdata set area" (PUMA). In order to conform to national statistical standards set by the Census Bureau, there is a minimum PUMA size larger than the sample for several of California's rural counties. Therefore, in some cases the "county-level" analysis is actually a PUMA-based analysis for an area encompassing several contiguous counties. Less problematically, California's largest urban counties include multiple PUMA's which we have aggregated to yield county-level data.

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There are several different potential analytic constructs which must be considered in estimating the size of the California limited English population in need of adult education services. One set of considerations relates to prior educational experience-- usually tracked by years of schooling (educational attainment) and educational achievement (reflected, at least in principle, by certificates, grades, etc.), the other to English-language ability.

The issue of characterizing English-language use in terms of proficiency is a complex one. One analytic approach, for example, explores personal and social language environment: language learning history as evidenced by first language spoken or language spoken in the household a child grew up in, subsequent language use experience (often tracked among immigrants by age at arrival and length of time in the U.S). Another set of considerations relates to the specific dimension of language proficiency in question, e.g., understanding of spoken English, ability to speak English oneself, ability in reading English, ability in writing English. Yet another important set of considerations relates to context of use -- prevailing patterns of language use in the community where a person resides (tracked in census data as "linguistic isolation"), or individual patterns of use, e.g., in talking with employers, co-workers, friends, family, in social settings such as hospitals, banks, police stations, schools, town meetings, etc.[5]

Nonetheless, in practice, an individual's self-assessed English-language ability is the usual basis for categorizing an individual as "limited English-proficient" (LEP); this is the one we use for the macro-level analyses in this chapter of the study, although in Chapter 2 and subsequent chapters, we consider in detail the extent to which English-language proficiency is "multi-dimensional" and context-sensitive, that is, depending on the social context and functional purpose of communicating in English.

State-level tabulations of the State Adult Literacy Survey (SALS) provide a wealth of information bearing directly on the numbers of limited English adults in California.[6]

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[5] There are important distinctions to be drawn between competence and performance, traditionally referred to in linguistics in Saussurian terms as the distinction between langue (ability defined as internalized system of language skills) and parole (language performance ability, usually in spoken use of a language).

[6] Population estimates from the NALS are adults in 1990 and, thus, are consistent with census baseline data. These population estimates are derived from NALS table columns labeled WGT N, that is estimates

According to the SALS, about 6.7 million California adults grew up in a household where some language other than English was spoken. Approximately 5.26 million spoke only a language other than English before they started school. Another 1.4 million grew up in a bilingual household. However, about 3.4 million of these adults said that they now usually speak English. Thus, in 1990, there remained about 3.3 million who do not usually speak English.

The SALS also asked respondents to assess their English-language proficiency. The survey results indicate that, in the 1990 baseline year, about 2.2 million California adults understood English "not well" or "not at all", while 2.4 million were limited in speaking English.[7] Still more, 2.8 million, had problems in reading English and 3.6 million in writing English. As we discuss later, in **Chapters 2** and **4** of this report, there are important differences between perceived English-language ability, English-language skills in relation to ability to function in different social contexts, and dimension of language facility -- i.e., speaking, reading, writing.

There are additional definitional difficulties and data quality problems which give rise to uncertainties and ambiguities regarding the exact size, distribution, and socioeconomic characteristics of the limited English-proficient proficient population in California and the proportion of this population which might be in need of adult education services. These difficulties stem from the need to identify a "core" adult education service population in terms which can be related to the practical functioning of the adult education system in California.[8] For the purposes of identifying the "core" adult education service population, i.e., that population targeted for services, we further narrowed the "universe of need" as follows:

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based on survey data. For details of the methodology see Lynn Jenkins and Irwin Kirsch, **Adult Literacy In California**, ETS, 1994, Appendix 1.

[7] See Table 4.5, Lynn Jenkins and Irwin Kirsch, **Adult Literacy In California**, ETS, 1994.

[8] Although adult education services are legally available to virtually any person over 16 in California, the basic skills instruction services of primary concern in the context of this report are primarily for persons with less than college level schooling. As SALS data show, the primary "fuzzy" area for adult education targeting is among a "secondary" population with adequate levels of educational attainment but who, nonetheless, have very limited information-handling competencies.

a) the overall LEP adult education service population is defined as consisting of only out-of-school adults 16 years of age and older) who reported speaking English "not well" or "not at all with less than four years of college (since the NALS shows that many adults with some college still have serious literacy deficits."[9]

b) the core LEP adult education service population is defined as the subset of the overall LEP service population who have less than a high school diploma or 12 years of schooling in their country of origin.

c) the enrolled LEP service population is the subset of the overall LEP service population who are presumed to need further services even though they are currently being served by an adult education program Some of this sub-population may not be identified as part of the target population in our primary analysis of census data because they reported they were "in school" in March, 1990.[10]

We estimate that there was, in 1990, a core adult education service population of about 1.9 million LEP adults clearly in need of adult education services. This "core" LEP population includes approximately 1.45 million persons identified in the census (PUMS), an estimated 270,000 who were not enumerated in the census and another 180,000 low-education limited English persons who were enrolled in an adult school, community-based, or community college adult learning program in March, 1990.

If we add to this 1990 core population, about 200,000 limited English adults with higher educational attainment (a high school degree, its equivalent, or some college) who, nonetheless, are likely to have problems with English and some basic skills deficits and need services there are likely to have been, in 1990, an overall LEP adult education service population of about 2.1 million limited English adults in need of adult education services.

Limited English-proficient persons, therefore, make up about two-fifths of California's adult education service population of about 5.3 million adults.[11] While the

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[9] The census response categories include only four options: "very well", "well", "not well", "not at all." Thus, our census-based analyses may include a significant number of persons who, in other contexts, have reported they speak "some" English and who in responding to the census were presented with a forced choice between rating themselves as speaking English "well" or "not well."

[10] In our analyses of PUMS data we excluded "in school" enrollees to screen out high school enrollees.

[11] There are approximately 5.0 million PUMS-identified persons in the adult education population (i.e., out-of-school 16 years of age or older, less than a college degree) of which approximately 2.0 million (40%) are identifiable as limited English persons. Total need for services, i.e., the "overall" adult education population, is better reflected in SALS data which yields a somewhat different estimate of "universe of

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"overall" English-proficient adult education population includes many persons with more than a high school education but substantial functional skills deficits, the "overall" population of limited English-proficient persons is more likely to include persons with an adequate level of schooling, basic skills, and native-language literacy skills but specific needs to develop their English-language ability. In fact, CASAS data show that 13% of ESL enrollees have a college or technical degree.[12]

Most limited English low-education adults in the core adult education service population are immigrants (about 1.8 million) but approximately 100,000 U.S.-born out-of school adults in California are also limited in English. While some may have grown up in bilingual households, others may have grown up in a monolingual non-English speaking household.

Table 1-1 below provides a county-by-county estimate of the distribution of the overall population of limited English persons potentially needing adult education services in 1990.[13].

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need" than census data -- since a substantial proportion of high school graduates and in-school adults have literacy skills deficits. However, census data are the only uniform source of data on LEP distribution by county.

[12] CASAS, **Student Progress and Goal Attainment: Federally Funded ABE Programs in California 1994-1995**, September, 1995.

[13] The analyses of the distribution of LEP adults which underly the thematic maps are based on raw PUMS data, unadjusted for either census undercount or numbers of LEP students needing additional services who were enrolled in an adult school or community college in March, 1990. While the distribution of the "core" service population of LEP adults is likely to differ somewhat from that of the "peripheral" population who may have more schooling (being more rural) we have no solid basis for quantifying this.

Table 1-1
Distribution of LEP
Adult Education Service Population- 1990

County	Estimated 1990 Universe of Need Overall LEP Adult	County	Estimated 1990 Universe of Need Overall LEP Adult
Alameda	51,869	Orange	184,629
Alpine	12	Placer	2,325
Amador	321	Plumas	127
Butte	3,263	Riverside	61,407
Calaveras	341	Sacramento	26,958
Colusa	634	San Benito	3,051
Contra Costa	19,067	San Bernardino	58,177
Del Norte	254	San Diego	111,643
El Dorado	1,939	San Francisco	76,115
Fresno	25,803	San Joaquin	31,287
Glenn	966	San Luis Obispo	4,456
Humboldt	1,160	San Mateo	34,893
Imperial	15,397	Santa Barbara	21,920
Inyo	195	Santa Clara	81,107
Kern	30,438	Santa Cruz	13,644
Kings	6,180	Shasta	822
Lake	867	Sierra	15
Lassen	299	Siskiyou	470
Los Angeles	1,018,186	Solano	7,478
Madera	7,324	Sonoma	9,829
Marin	4,172	Stanislaus	20,776
Mariposa	153	Sutter	2,790
Mendocino	1,374	Tehama	1,934
Merced	16,493	Trinity	509
Modoc	104	Tulare	30,157
Mono	106	Tuolumne	517
Monterey	32,486	Ventura	38,932
Napa	4,121	Yolo	4,765
Nevada	363	Yuba	2,521
1990 STATE TOTAL	2,077,140		

Table 1-1 provides a dramatic summary of the distributional challenges faced in allocating resources to serve limited English adults in California. A single one of California's 58 counties, Los Angeles, has almost half of the state's limited English population, while 19 counties have less than one-half of a percent of the population. Taking a slightly different perspective, **Table 1-1** can be usefully seen as highlighting the need for regional planning for California adult education. Approximately two-thirds of the state's limited English population potentially in need of adult education services lives in a southern California mega-region consisting of four counties -- Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, and San Diego. Another 13% of the LEP population lives in the San Francisco Bay counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara. While each of these predominantly urban counties has some rural areas and some, such as San Diego, San Bernardino, and San Mateo counties, actually have more rural than urban area in terms of square miles, the underlying reality is that about three-quarters of California's limited English adult education population lives in urban areas.

From a service delivery perspective, planning should ideally consider the distribution of identified service populations within regions, counties, and even within communities. Thus, while it is useful to look at the needs of the San Joaquin Valley as a region, there is a continuing need for micro-level planning as a means for efficiently allocating resources and effectively configuring services. Fresno County, for example, is an extremely large and diverse county with more than 20 small communities which are predominantly Hispanic (Rochin, 1995). Thus, even within the county, there are sub-regions (e.g., the Westside and the Eastside) and communities (e.g., Reedley and Orange Cove) which differ significantly in population composition and, presumably, access to adult education services. This is likely to be the prevailing pattern, not an exception.

As a means of addressing this issue and highlighting the diversity of California's limited English populations in the current study, we conducted community case studies in three communities. Each of these communities --- one in the urbanized Southern California region (in Long Beach), one in the urbanized Bay Area region (in Redwood City), and one in rural central California (in Sanger) ---has moderate to very large limited English populations but, otherwise, they are very different. Beyond the findings regarding specific adult education needs (reported in **Chapters 2 4**), and the effectiveness of strategies adopted by local adult schools to meet local needs (reported in **Chapter 5**), the case studies provide a valuable reminder that the uneven distribution of California's limited

English population implies diversity of needs and reflects the current unequal distribution of resources for adult education programs. Thus, systematic macro-level planning should be linked to equally systematic micro-level planning if California state government hopes to respond effectively in allowing limited English adult learners to build the skills they need.

C. Variations in the Prevalence of LEP Adults Needing Services

From a service delivery perspective, the proportion of a population in a county or region needing services is as important as absolute numbers, in part because prevalence tends to determine perceived community needs. At the same time, an analysis of the "density" of a need (in this case LEP adults' presumed learning needs) may be less affected by the vagaries of arbitrary jurisdictional boundaries of county lines which affect tabulations of absolute numbers of persons needing service.[14]

Moreover, if we consider the prevalence of a particular sort of need to affect not only the individuals who experience those needs but, also, the life of an entire community (i.e., social relations, economy, institutional functioning), then an examination of variations in prevalence of need for adult education services is particularly valuable. In fact, there is substantial evidence that there are "community effects" stemming from the "social capital" of a community as reflected (at least, in part) by the educational attainment of different segments of the population.[15] An important strand in immigration research is that the "funds of knowledge" developed in immigrants' communities of origin come to be seen as less valuable in a new environment, creating inter-generational stresses. From this perspective, for example, one role of adult education might be to "re-value" existing human and social capital "assets."[16] The precise dynamics by which the skills deficits associated

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[14] The geographic, economic, and cultural diversity of California makes examination of sub-county patterns of need a practical necessity, although counties, as the primary unit of local government, are the basic unit for policy analysis.

[15] There is an extensive literature relating to this issue, as much of the policy debate on immigration policy (and immigrant policy) includes attention to "immigrant quality" as indicated by educational attainment. However, the macro-level datasets most commonly used for exploring these issues (e.g. by Borjas, Waldinger, Tienda, Jensen, and others) provide only inadequate indices of "community life" as the analyses are oriented primarily toward labor market phenomena and, thus, use hourly earnings and unemployment as dependent variables.

[16] An example of such re-valuation may be the skills associated with Mexican social practices of mutualism. Ed Kissam and Jo Ann Intili have argued that a challenge facing both Mexico and the U.S. in

with the standard need indicators used in the current analysis affect community life are complex. They deserve much more study; nonetheless, it is very likely that the relationship is not linear and that there are "tipping points" where the problems associated with educational inequity become much more serious than in communities where prevalence of educational needs is at lower levels.[17] Presumably, when prevailing levels of education and/or information management skills are lower, the niches for acquiring new skills or building on existing skills foundations are narrower and structured programs of formal intervention are more essential. Certainly, given the extent to which informal adult learning takes place in the workplace, the role of industries relying on an immigrant workforce in California is particularly problematic. Typically, concentrated settlements of immigrants have emerged because of labor demand from these businesses. This "low-skill" low wage tertiary labor market consists of high-turnover jobs with very limited possibilities for career advancement and on-the-job skills development. There is preliminary evidence demonstrating that such local adaptions negatively affect not only the labor market, but, also, many other facets of community life, including the texture, objectives, and functioning of community institutions, among them the educational system.[18]

Map 1-1 below shows the ratio of LEP adults in need of service to the total population for California's 58 counties. While **Map 1-1** provides only gross indicators of the relative prevalence of LEP population in need of adult education services in different areas of California, it provides a crucial empirical foundation for developing the system's capacity and capability of responding to density/intensity of need.

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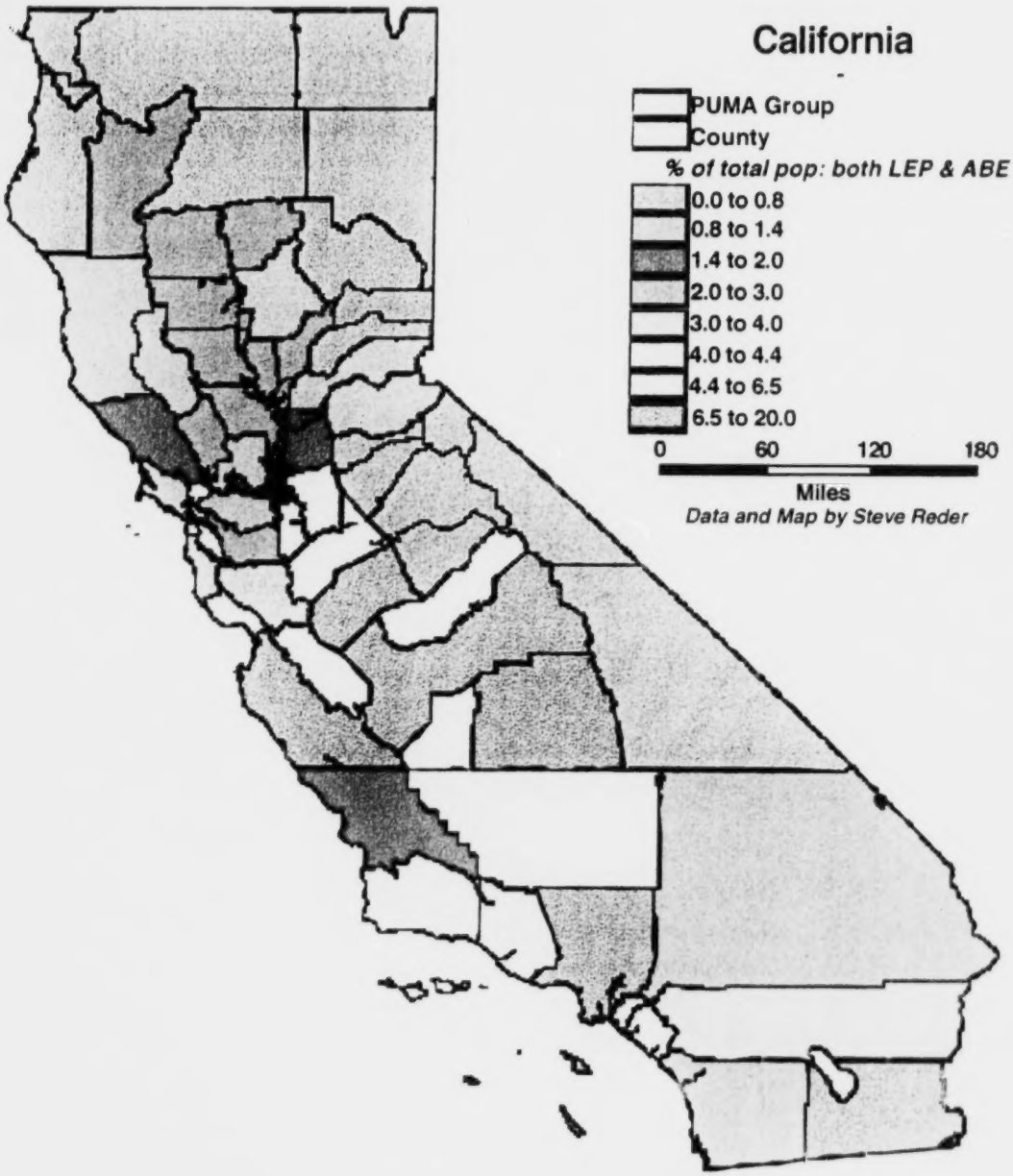
an emerging global economy is to build on these highly-prevalent skills in the informal sector as part of workforce development. For details, see Ed Kissam and Jo Ann Intili, "From *Compadrazgo* to Total Quality Management", paper presented to 2nd International Conference on Educational Quality, San Diego, February, 1994.

[17] This issue is discussed at greater length in a preliminary document prepared for California's Adult Education Strategic Planning Committee (Kissam and Intili, 1996). The bottom line is that there do appear to be extensive and important interactions among distinct descriptors of a community's demographic and socioeconomic composition (e.g. ethnicity, English-speaking ability, recency of immigration, education, family income among different sub-populations) and community life.

[18] Some of this evidence was presented in an analysis of CBEDS data, Elias S. Lopez, "Education and Integration Prospects by Agricultural Regions of California", paper presented to the Asilomar Conference on Integration of Immigrants into Rural California, May, 1995. Lopez's analysis probably reflects educational aspirations, counseling practices, and a wide range of factors.

Map 1-1:
% of Total Population who are Limited-English Adults in Need of ABE by County



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The ratio of LEP adults needing services to the total population varies from a low of 0.4% in Shasta County to a high of 10.3% in Imperial County. In reflecting on the scaling of **Map 1-1** it is particularly useful to recognize that there is a very large range in the densities mapped although the ratio of LEP adults in need of service to total population is relatively low. For example, the prevalence of limited English adults needing services in Los Angeles County is, at 7.8% of total population, more than thirteen times that found in a "low-prevalence" county such as Humboldt (where the LEP population makes up 0.6% of the total population).

The density gradients of need presented in **Map 1-1** provide a picture of the distribution of limited English adults' service needs which varies in some important ways from the purely quantitative analysis. Most importantly, the three "bands" of counties with relatively high prevalence of LEP adults in need of service (those represented in yellow, salmon, and dark pink) are mostly rural, although Los Angeles and Orange counties rank very high in terms of LEP prevalence as well as numbers. While the LEP population is concentrated as might be expected throughout the San Joaquin Valley, **Map 1-1**, for example, highlights how intense the need for services is in widely separated counties such as Imperial, Tulare, Madera, Merced, and San Benito which have relatively small populations.

It deserves note that, the density gradients of **Map 1-1** provide some indirect evidence of the diffusion of limited English populations within California. Thus, for example, most of the northern Sacramento Valley, as well as mountain counties such as Trinity, Placer, and El Dorado, appear to have moderate levels of limited English adults in need of services.

D. Language Minorities within the LEP Population

Information on the languages spoken by LEP adults in need of adult education services provides guidance for program planning, including outreach, targeted hiring of bilingual staff where appropriate, and curriculum design. In this section, we review the available data on language minorities within the LEP population. This section begins with a rank-ordered tabulation of the leading languages, followed by information on the differing distribution of each language minority group. At the end of the section, we discuss the quality of available data and the implications for program planning.

D-1 Leading Languages and the Prevalence of LEP persons in the adult education service population by county

Spanish is spoken by approximately 81% of the limited English population in need of adult education services in California, making this population the largest language minority in California. Seven of the remaining languages of the ten languages most commonly spoken by limited English-proficient persons in the adult education target population (i.e., out-of-school persons with low educational attainment) are Asian languages which make up about 14% of the languages spoken by LEP adults needing services.

Table 1-2 below shows in rank order the different language minorities which make up the LEP core population in need of adult education services in California in the baseline year 1990.[19]

Table 1-2
Top 10 Language Minorities
within the Core LEP Adult Population in Need of Services

Language	Primary Language	% of LEP Population
Spanish	1,138,000	81%
Chinese--Mandarin, Cantonese, all dialects	86,000	6%
Vietnamese	34,000	2%
Korean	19,000	1%
Tagalog and other Philippine languages	18,000	1%
Armenian	17,000	1%
Khmer	14,000	1%
Thai	13,000	1%
Portuguese	10,000	1%
Hmong	9,000	1%
All other	50,000	4%

** 1990 PUMS-identified core population. Rounded to nearest thousand. Total -- 1,408,000.*

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[19] **Table 1-2** tabulates only PUMS-identified language minorities within the LEP adult education core service population. Post-1990 influxes of Russians and other eastern European refugees have changed, and will continue to change, the language distribution. These refugee groups are likely to be better educated than some other groups and, thus, need different service configurations.

It is important to note that Asian-language and Spanish-speaking adult education populations are somewhat differently distributed in California. **Map 1-2A** shows, on a county-by-county basis, concentrations of persons speaking one of the more prevalent Asian languages within the service population (expressed as a % of the overall LEP adult education population). These data provide a relative indicator of the "mix" of languages in the adult education LEP target population in each county. It deserves note that the distribution of the LEP population speaking an Asian language differs somewhat from the distribution of adults of Asian ethnicity in need of adult education services (because English-proficient persons of Asian ethnicity are part of the overall adult education population).[20]

Map 1-2A provides new insight into the relative distribution and prevalence of Asian language minorities in need of adult education.[21] (**Maps Series 1-3** below further details the distribution for each specific language group). Not surprisingly, Asian-language minorities are a large proportion of the service population in San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara counties. There are also rural concentrations of Asian populations -- not only in Sacramento County but, also, in the northern Sacramento Valley county of Shasta and in Humboldt County (which, however, has a very small LEP adult education population.

Although there are dense pockets of LEP adults speaking an Asian language within Los Angeles county (including our case study community of Long Beach, for example) their numbers are much less than the Spanish-speaking service population countywide. A similar phenomenon can be seen in the San Joaquin Valley where, although there are substantial Asian-speaking service populations (e.g., the Hmong in Fresno and Merced counties, Tagalog and Chinese speakers in San Joaquin County), these populations are greatly outnumbered by Spanish speakers.

Although the overwhelming majority of the LEP service population in California is Spanish-speaking, the distribution of Spanish speakers is slightly different than that of the

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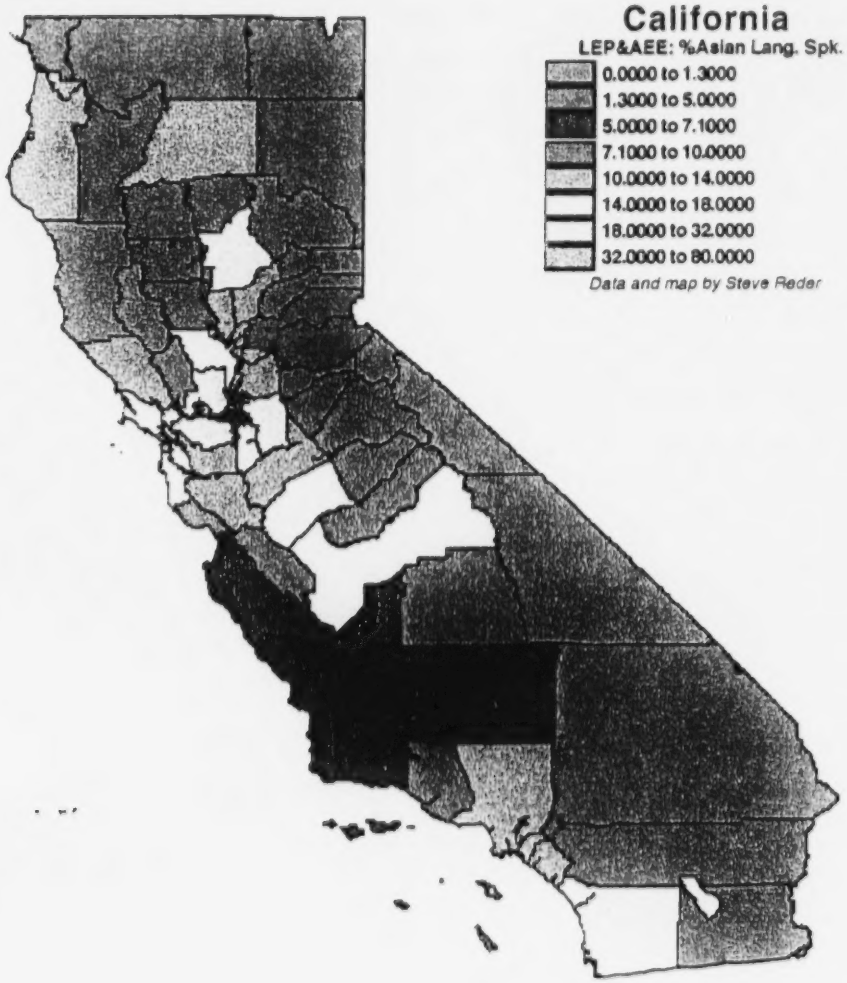
[20] Counties where there are relatively more English-speaking persons of Asian ethnicity and less Asian LEP persons include: Fresno, San Mateo, San Joaquin, Sutter, and Yuba.

[21] We have aggregated the most prevalent Asian languages in this map because the % of the adult education population consisting of each specific Asian language is much lower. For this reason, **Map Series 1-3** (below) reports absolute numbers for each individual language group rather than %.

overall LEP population. **Map 1-2B** shows the relative proportion of the LEP adult education service population which is Spanish-speaking on a county-by-county basis. As can be seen from **Map 1-2B**, Spanish-speaking LEP adults make up less than half the adult education target population in five counties: Alameda, Sacramento, San Francisco, Shasta, and Humboldt.

Map 1-2A:
Adults Speaking Asian Language as % LEP Population Needing Services by County



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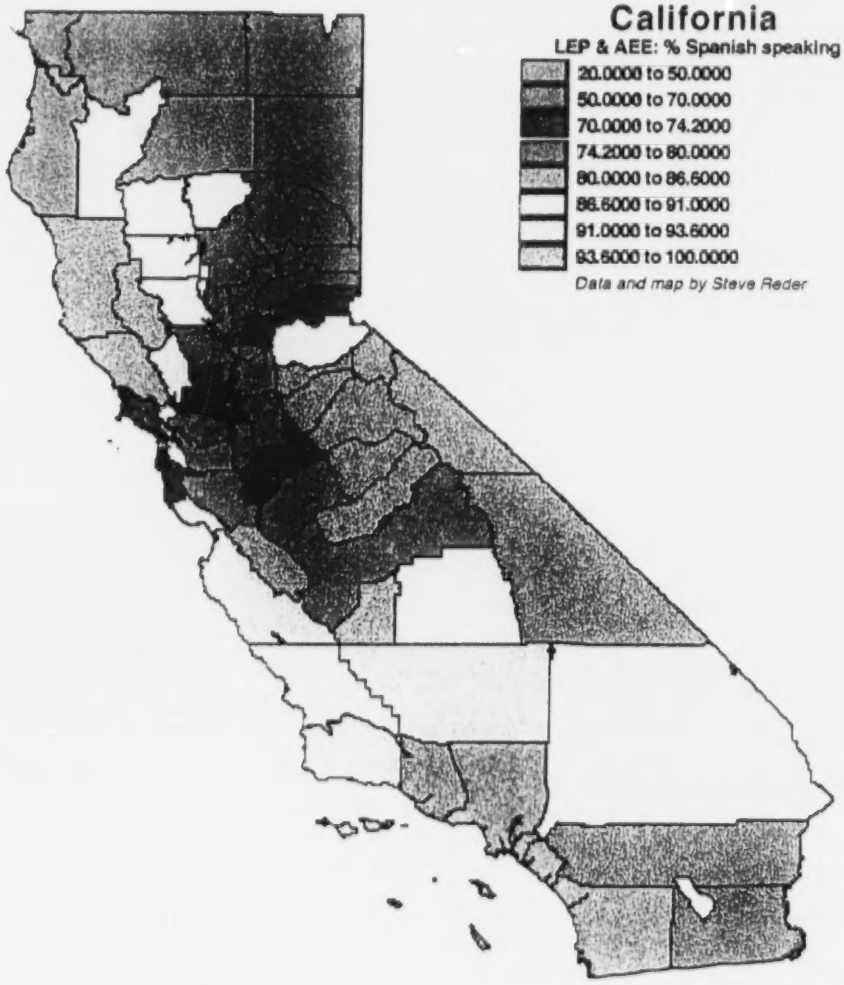
Map 1-2B:
Spanish-speaking Adults as % LEP Population Needing Services



The data presented in **Map Series 1-2** show that the traditional view of the ESL service delivery system as one which must, in every case, respond to the needs of multiple limited English populations is not an accurate one. While there is a pressing need for services targeted to multiple language minorities in some identified communities, this is the exception rather than the rule. In communities where there is language diversity, certainly, program planning should take into account the special needs of significant language minorities. However, the most effective use of resources will be to configure the statewide service delivery system to focus on developing high quality programs for language minorities primarily in targeted communities, not throughout the system.

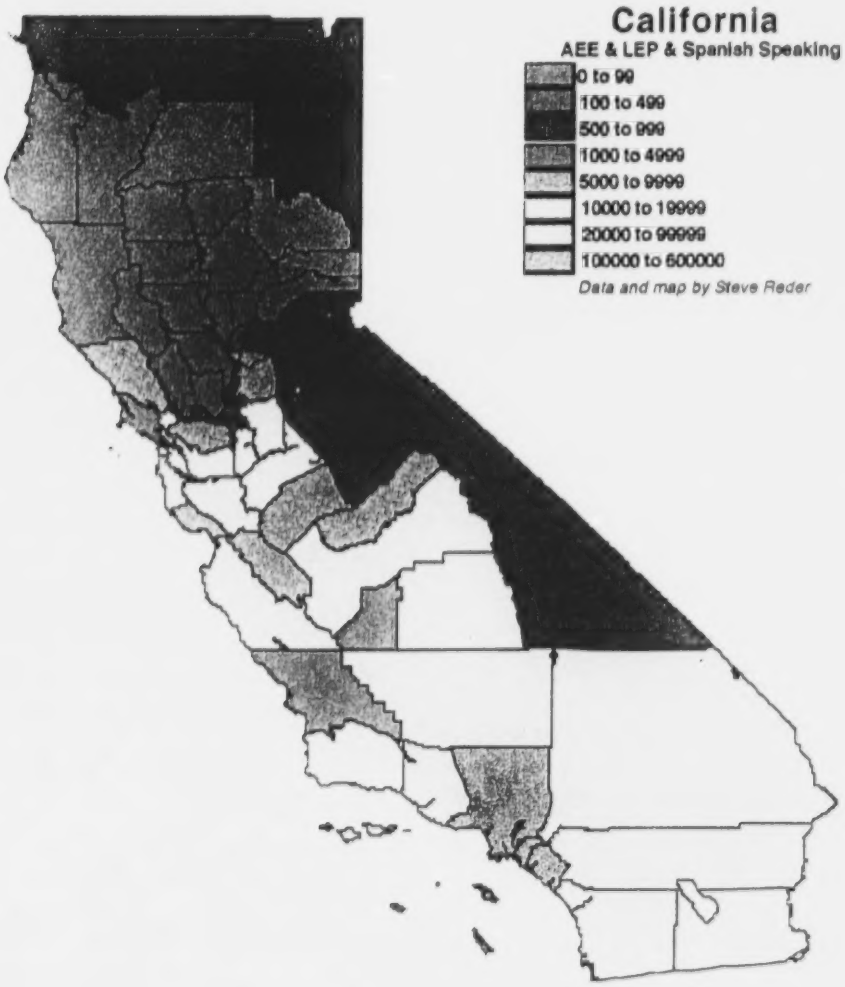
D-2 Numbers of LEP adults by "major" language

The following map series -- **Maps 1-3A-3K** show the absolute numbers of LEP persons in the adult education target population who speak each of the top 10 languages identified in **Table 1-2**. In reviewing these maps it is important to remember that the mapping reflects the core adult education LEP "target" population (i.e., with both limited English and low-schooling), i.e., not bilinguals and not highly educated limited English persons.

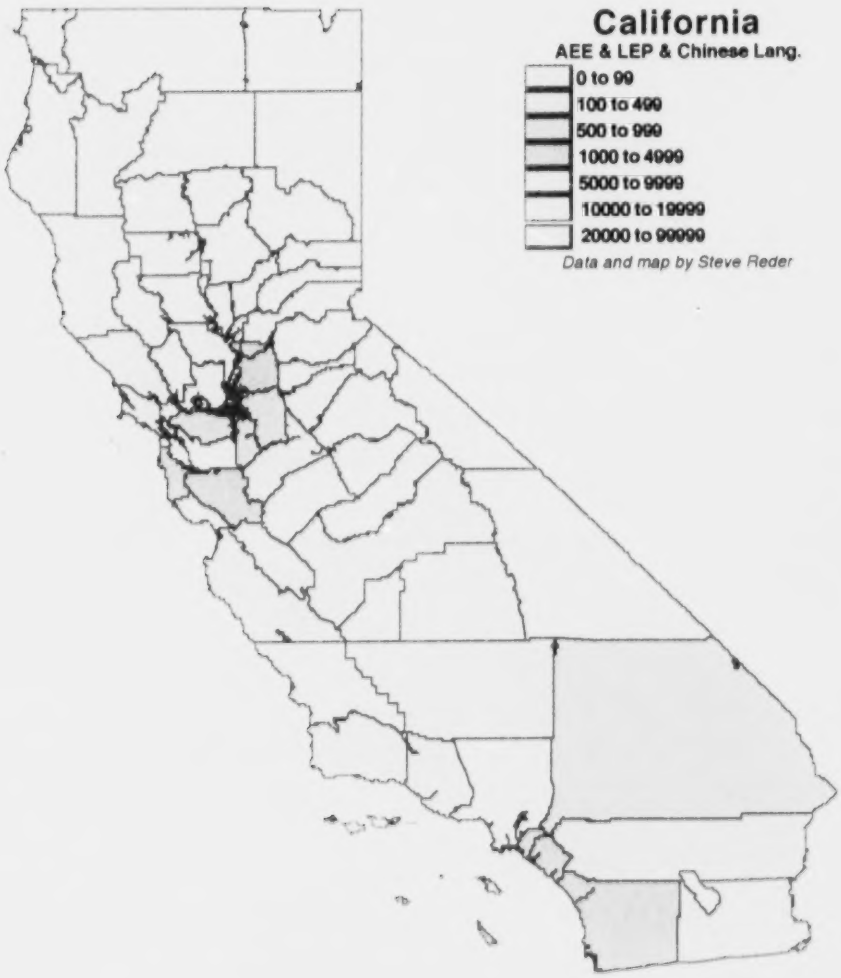
The mapping of absolute number of LEP adults is important for adult education because there is a service "threshold" where it becomes important to consider alternatives to classroom instruction if service is to be provided to a specific language group. However, the county-level representation, while showing something of the unevenness of distribution of LEP adults actually reflects even more dense concentrations of ethnic groups in different communities within each county, e.g., Hmong in Fresno, Cambodians in Long Beach. Thus, micro-planning is particularly crucial for services targeted to a specific language group who are not evenly distributed throughout the county, e.g., Vietnamese in Santa Clara and Monterey counties, Hmong in Fresno County.

Not surprisingly, given the size of Los Angeles county and its dominant role as an immigrant-receiving area, almost all major LEP populations are represented in the LA basin. Similarly, Fresno County, primarily the urbanized part of the county, is quite diverse linguistically.

Map 1-3A
Numbers of Spanish-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



Map 1-3B:
Numbers of Chinese-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



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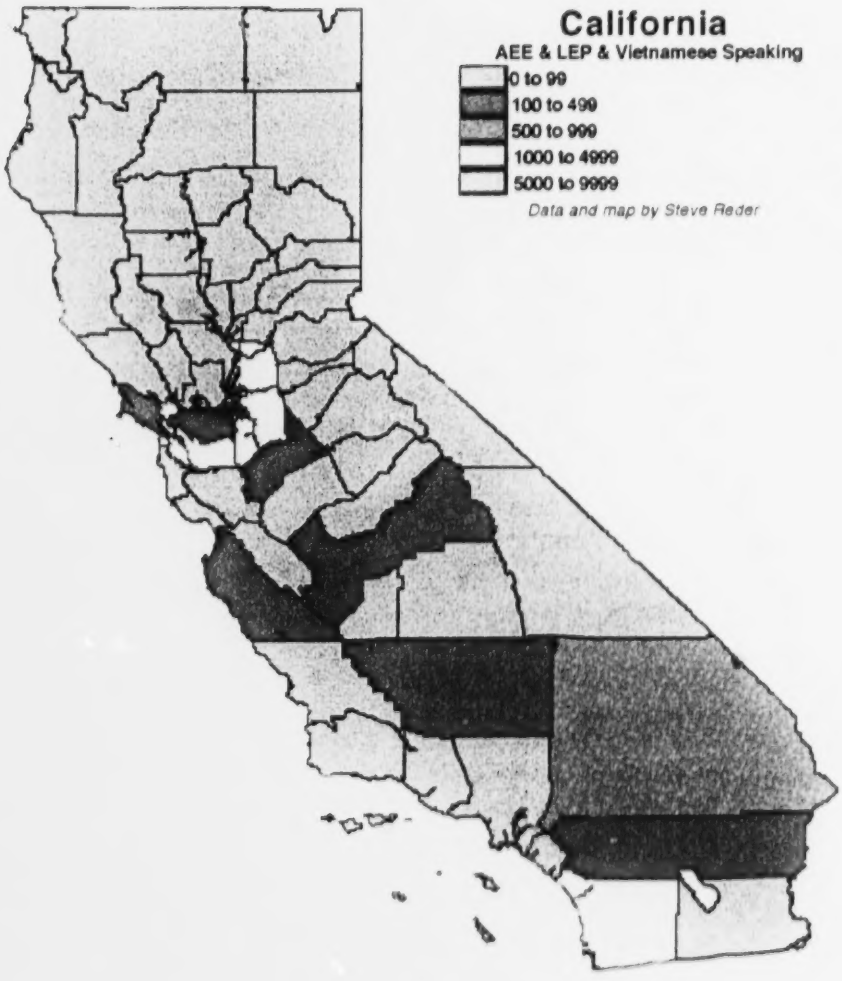
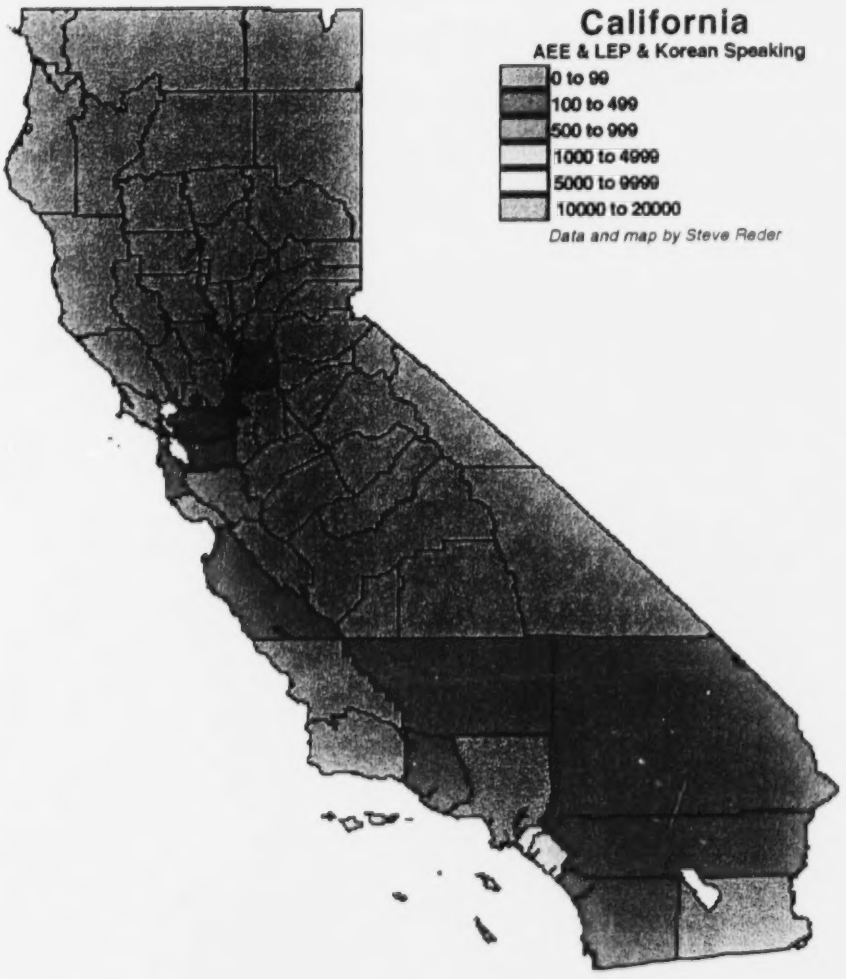
Map 1-3C:
Numbers of Vietnamese-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



Map 1-3D:
Numbers of Korean-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



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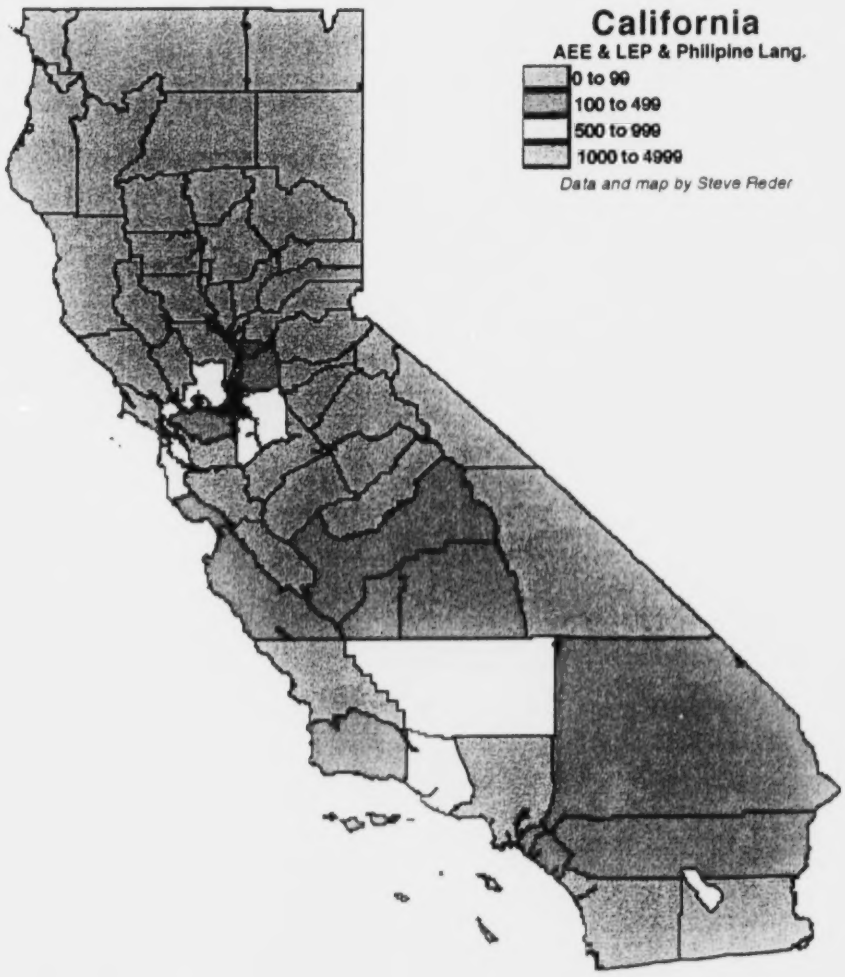
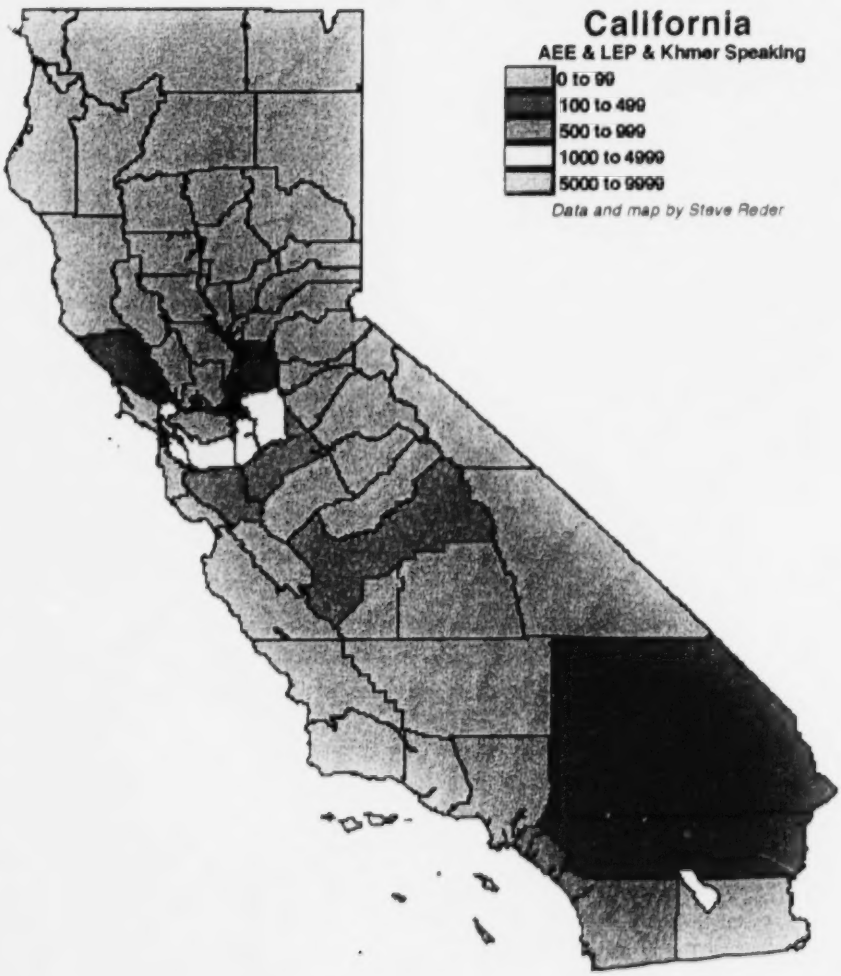
Map 1-3E:
Numbers of Tagalog/Other Phillipine Language Adults in Need of ABE by County



Map 1-3F:
Numbers of Armenian-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County

Map 1-3G:
Numbers of Khmer-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



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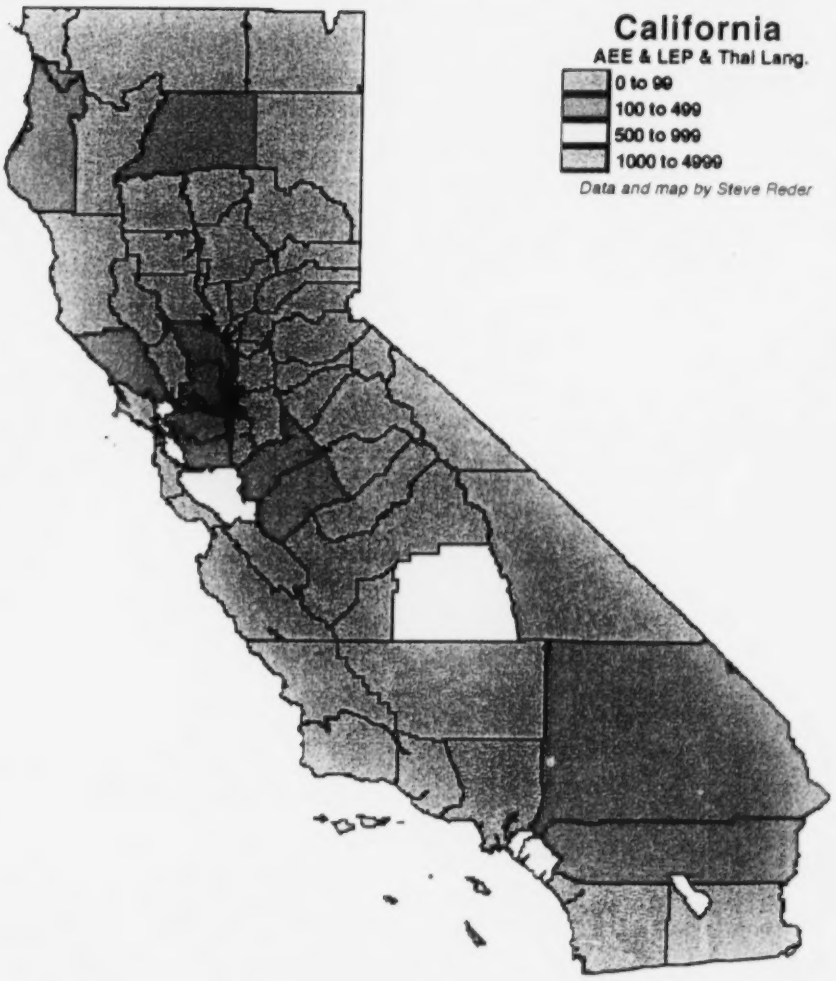
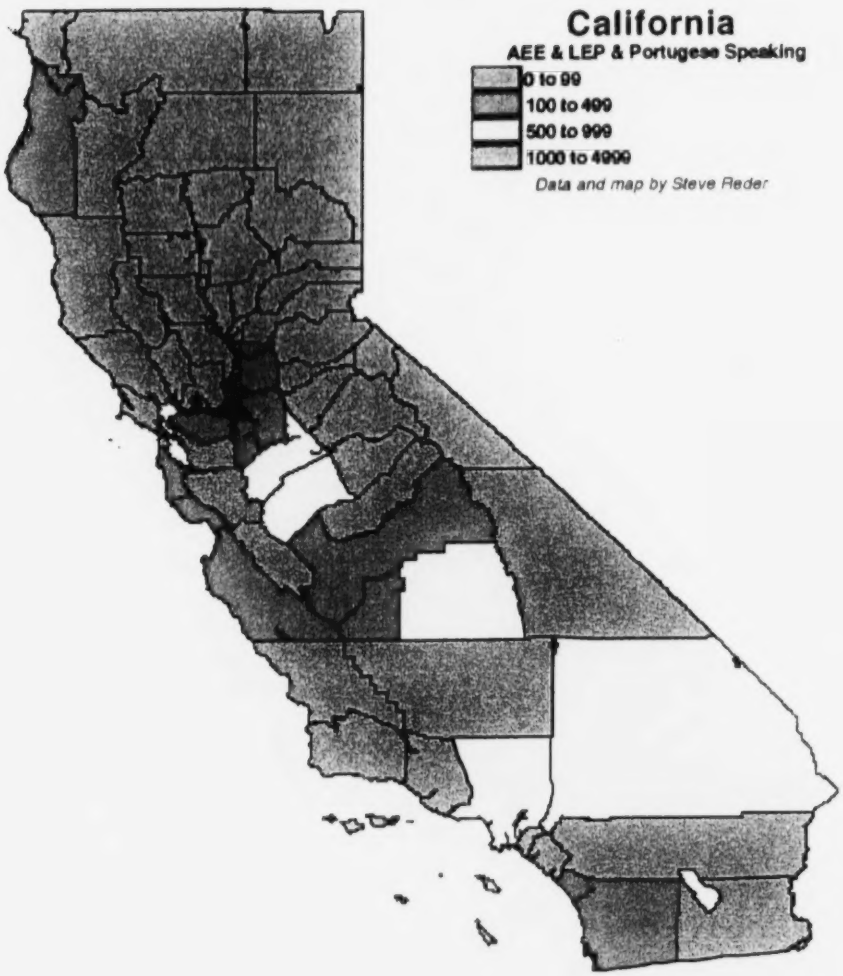
Map 1-3H:
Numbers of Thai-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



Map 1-3J:
Numbers of Portuguese-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County



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Map 1-3K:
Numbers of Hmong-speaking Adults in Need of ABE by County

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Maps I-3A-3K provide a useful tool for using limited program resources judiciously. These maps show that local service delivery systems in some areas of California can use their limited resources to respond to the needs of specific language concentrations of LEP adults other than Spanish-speaking persons. In these areas where there is a high concentration of a language/ethnic minority, development of specialized curricula, development of collaborative relationships with community-based service providers, and special staff recruitment efforts are very promising. Efforts to improve system responsiveness to each of these language groups is well-justified and should be a major priority in a relatively small numbers of communities but not in all counties

At the same time, this map series also shows that, in many rural counties, there is not always a "threshold" target population which justifies configuration of services to meet the needs of minorities among language minorities. In general, the language distribution of LEP adults in California suggests that relatively few adult schools need to plan their services so as to provide "general" offerings to multiple language groups. Given the dynamics of immigrant and refugee settlement, almost every adult education provider can develop programs tailored specifically to the needs of the "significant" LEP populations in their service area (usually only one or two). As we report in Chapters 2 and 5, this is, an important issue from the perspective of LEP ethnic/language minorities such as Hmong and Cambodians.

D-3 Data Issues Regarding Language Minorities in California

It is important for adult education planners to be aware of a) data quality considerations and b) possible changes in the profile of California language minorities in the period from 1990-1995.

The language data from 1990 census tabulations are consistent with information on the national origins of persons legalized under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) and arrivals of legal immigrants, refugees, and asylees.[22] The vast majority (92%) of IRCA-legalized immigrants arrived from Mexico, Central America, and South

[22] However, immigration data do not include cross-tabulations by English-language ability so a definitive relationship between country of origin and limited English immigrant populations cannot be established.

America.[23] In contrast, the flow of legal immigrants, refugees, and aslyees include more Asian and European immigrants. Immigrants from Africa and Oceania make up a very small proportion of California's foreign-born population.

There are several relatively minor additions and modifications needed to the 1990 picture of California's LEP language minorities. Analyses of INS data (Warren, 1994) suggest that the 1990 census data may slightly underrepresent the current population of two language groups -- Farsi speakers and Tagalog speakers. Information from leading immigrant-receiving counties (ELT Task Force, 1996), together with INS data on refugee applications suggest that Russian-speakers are now likely to be among the major LEP minorities. Secondary migration flows of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians are likely to have further increased the size of these language minorities among the LEP adult education population. Given the relatively small size of these language-minority groups and the fact that virtually all immigration (both legal and illegal) is via social networks, it is crucial that planning to serve language minorities within the LEP population be locally-based and respond to the constantly-shifting flux of arriving immigrants, asylees, and refugees.

Further attention might also be given to the implications of the sub-populations of language minorities within language groups. These include Maya speakers from Mexico and Guatemala, Mixtec speakers from Mexico whose Spanish is somewhat limited, as well as Hmong, Laotians, and Vietnamese who are bilingual in languages other than English (e.g., Khmer/French, Vietnamese/Chinese).

E. The Distribution of limited English "At Risk" Workers and Public Assistance Recipients among the Adult Education Target Population

In this section, we report the distribution of two special sub-populations of LEP persons in need of adult education services: under-employed workers and recipients of public assistance. Our mapping of the distribution of these "special population sub-groups" provides primarily a prototype for the ways in which extant data can be used systematically and practically for proactive adult education planning; such analyses are most powerful when combined with "targeted" micro-planning formulated to look in greater depth at local program design options.

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[23] California Tomorrow, **Out of the Shadows: The IRCA/SLIAG Opportunity**, 1989.

In the context of current policy priorities, both implementation of federal "welfare reform" legislation and upcoming efforts to consolidate separately-authorized adult education and employment training programs into a single "seamless" one-stop shopping service network, it is particularly important to consider how English-language limitations, limited schooling, and other factors may interact to affect demand for service, underlying needs for skills development, and the type of program design required to effectively respond to learners' needs and dovetail with other service providers' efforts.

Our focus on "at risk" workers and public-assistance recipients as a prototype for adult education planning for "market segments" or service sub-groups stems not only from the immediate problems faced by legal immigrants who will lose eligibility for Food Stamps and may lose eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) but, also, from the underlying link between basic skills deficits and marginality in the labor market. As research over the past three decades has clearly shown, a large portion of the population who, at any point in time, receives public assistance scallops in and out of poverty due to labor market problems which stem both from their own skills limitations and the nature of the secondary labor market.

Map 1-4A below shows on a county-by-county basis variations in the proportion of the adult education target population who are "at-risk" workers, that is under-employed workers whose limited English and basic skills limitations seriously constrain their job mobility, their career advancement potential, or place them at high risk for job "churning" or displacement.[24] This is an extremely important sub-population for targeted adult education services as skills enhancement can make the difference between economic self-sufficiency and dependency.

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[24] The representations are consistent with the format used in the database being used for California's overall adult education strategic planning. For comparable data on the general adult education target population, see, Jo Ann Intili and Ed Kissam, "Data Inventory and Preliminary Analyses to Support CDE Strategic Planning for Adult Education", Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit, California Department of Education, September 30, 1996.

Map 1-4B below shows on a county-by-county basis variations in the proportion of the adult education LEP target population who are recipients of public assistance.[25] This population's needs are, to some extent, distinct from those of underemployed workers.[26] Understanding the distribution of this population is particularly important within the context of the legislative changes incorporated in the federal "welfare reform" legislation as both legal and undocumented immigrants' access to publicly-funded services will be seriously compromised. Even if legal immigrants are, ultimately, treated on a par with citizens with regard to eligibility for assistance to families in need (formerly AFDC, now TANF), the Food Stamp eligibility of many, including the working poor, will be compromised.[27]

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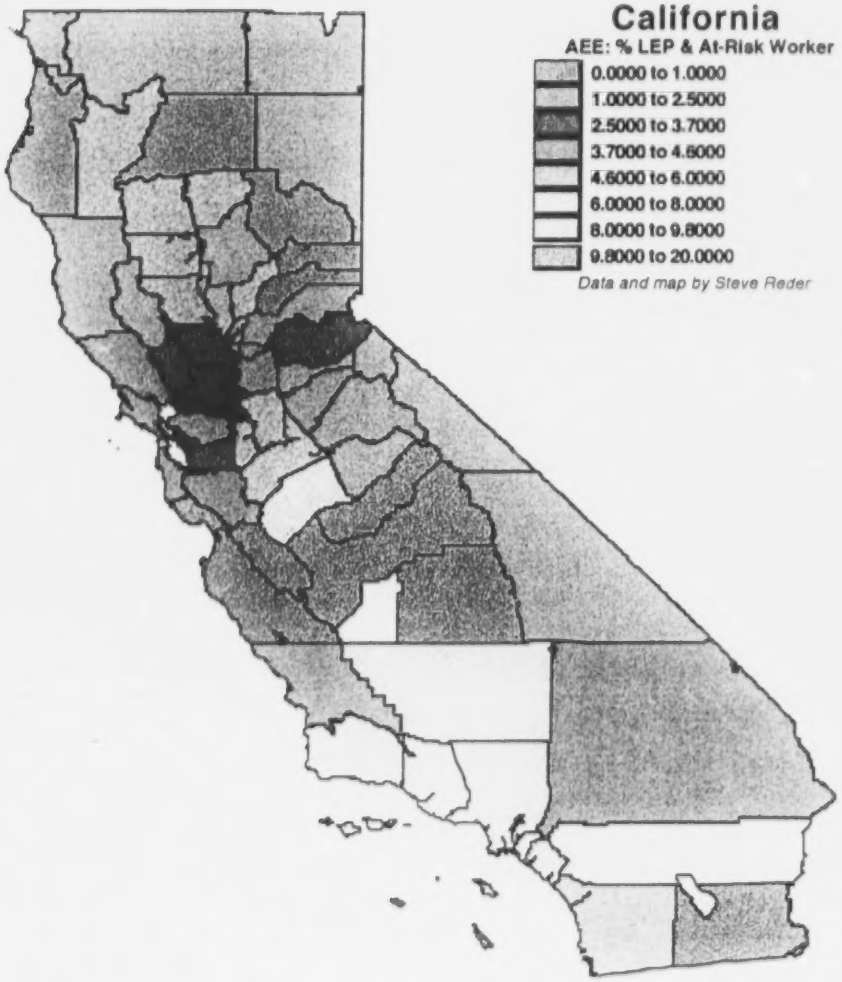
[25] The decennial census does not distinguish among different programs of "public assistance." California counties are currently developing cross-tabulations of Food Stamp and SSI recipients by immigration status but these are not yet uniformly available. It should be noted that these tabulations (which are the best available data on program utilization) do not routinely have data on assistance recipients' English-language proficiency. The non-comparability of the two relevant datasets is problematic for planning.

[26] It must be remembered that census data provide only a "snapshot" of the population. In reality, many "at risk" workers in the lowest tiers of the low-wage labor market sporadically become recipients of Food Stamps, AFDC, WIC, or other means-tested programs providing family support services. For the purposes of this analysis, we consider the populations distinct ones but it should be remembered that the sub-population distinctions are not hard-edged ones; they are more like permeable membranes, with gradual migration/diffusion from one status to another.

[27] The specific provisions of California's implementation of H.R. 3734 are unknown and are likely to generate a great deal of controversy. The federal legislation permits state implementation of exclusionary regulations but does not mandate a bar on legal immigrants' receipt of TANF. In contrast, the bar on Food Stamp eligibility is mandated, but with important exceptions under the "40-quarters of work" provisions. Unfortunately, for many immigrant workers demonstration of 40 quarters of work is not trivial because their employers (e.g. farm labor contractors) may not have reported their earnings.

Map I-4A:
LEP At-Risk Workers as % of Adult Education Target Population by County



Map 1-4B:
LEP Public Assistance Recipients as % of Adult Ed Target Population by County

Map 1-4A shows primarily rural but, also, urban concentrations of "at risk" limited English workers in several different segments of the immigrant labor market -- farmwork, urban manufacturing, and service industries. As in previous map depictions, counties shaded in yellow or pink are those with higher-than-average concentrations of "at risk" limited English workers.

Map 1-4B shows a slightly different distribution of public assistance recipients. Map **1-4B** confirms that the LEP population is not heavily dependent on public assistance.[28] In contrast to stereotypes about use of "welfare", **Map 1-4B** also shows that the highest proportion of LEP public assistance recipients are likely to be found in the urbanized areas of rural counties (e.g., Bakersfield, Fresno, Sacramento), not in the urban metropolitan areas.[29] This probably reflects, in part, the historically high levels of refugee reliance on public assistance and serves as a gauge of the potential impact of "welfare reform" on the affected groups.

F. Different Levels of English-language Skills -- "No English" vs. "Some English"

Maps 1-5A and **1-5B** show the proportion of the total population consisting of an adult education LEP target population speaking no English ("not at all") in comparison to those who are limited in English (i.e., speak "not well). These differences, particularly when mapped at a higher level of geographic resolution ("zooming in" to the community level), can be useful in configuring the adult education service delivery system.

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[28] The rate of public assistance within this population is below 4.1% in all but five counties. Fix and Passel report a 3.7% rate of public assistance use among native-born adults 15-64 years of age.

[29] The PUMS data do not directly show the concentrations of LEP public assistance recipients in the urbanized regional centers of rural counties but, taken in conjunction with other research, we believe this analysis is justified. For a detailed discussion of the Fresno County data, see Michael Fix et al., "Poverty Amidst Prosperity: Immigration and the Changing Face of Rural California", Urban Institute, April 15, 1996.

Map 1-5A:
Persons Speaking English "Not Well" as % of Overall Population by County

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Map 1-5B:
Persons Speaking No English as % of Overall Population by County

Fresno, Madera, Riverside, Ventura, and San Benito counties have a population "mix" with relatively more persons who speak no English.[30] However, these variations are more easily observed at the community level, because residence patterns among foreign-born persons who speak some English and no English are somewhat different.

Ideally, macro-level planning will take into account the interactions among labor market factors, migration patterns, community residential patterns, etc., as elements which serve to affect the degree to which different sub-populations are limited in English. Such distinctions have great potential for planning service system configuration.[31] For example, a great deal is known about the special adult education needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers but very few programs have configured their services to explicitly respond to these patterns.[32] Migrant and seasonal field workers are a paradigm case of an occupationally-defined service population who is known to include a high proportion of persons who speak no English. Another small but distinct population, consisting of field supervisors and labor contractors, know "some" English and need very different services -- e.g., GED in Spanish as part of career-upgrading or, perhaps, bilingual instruction in vocational English.

G. Summary -- Statewide Distribution of the LEP Population

Baseline data from the 1990 PUMS show the LEP population in California to be distributed unevenly throughout the state. These data highlight the urgency of configuring California's adult learning system to respond to the needs of diverse service populations. While the vast majority of limited English adults in need of adult education services are concentrated in a few urban counties, the PUMS data show that the relative proportion of

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[30] Madera County is known to be a receiving area for Mixtec immigrants from Mexico who are relatively isolated socially. However, it is not clear what the explanation might be for the prevalence of no-English persons in San Benito county. It must be remembered, however, that the numbers are very small for these rural counties.

[31] Binational discussions among six Mexican border states and five U.S. border states, including California, have included attention to the possible role of "anytime, anyplace" adult education service delivery networks configured to respond to the special needs of shuttle migrants. K-12 migrant education providers in California and Texas have engaged in such planning for over a decade.

[32] See S.J. Velarde et al, The Adult Education of Migrant Farmworkers, Slaughter and Associates, 1993. Report prepared for Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education.

the adult education population who are limited in English is even higher in some rural areas than in the urban counties.

The **Map Series 1-1** through **1-5** provides different "windows" for understanding the diversity of limited English populations in California. Not only is the LEP population distributed unevenly throughout California; there are also important variations in the makeup and density of the LEP adult education service population.

The data showing the heterogeneity of the LEP adult education target population have many potential uses for adult education planners who seek to re-configure the current service delivery system. Use of PUMS data for macro-level planning in combination with systematic local area planning has the potential to allow California's adult education to move away from a one-size-fits-all model toward the development of a flexible, responsive "customer-driven" system. While this type of demographic and socioeconomic data do not provide definitive insight into patterns of service demand they provide valuable guidance for anticipating adult learners' characteristic learning objectives and needs and devising creative strategies to respond to them.

H. Growth and Shifts in the Distribution of the LEP Population in Need of Services - 1990-1995

In the previous section we have presented information on distribution of the LEP population based on "best available data" which happens to be our adjustment of 1990 PUMS. However, for planning purposes, it is desirable to generate an estimate of the rate at which the population of the LEP population in need of adult education services has grown from 1990 through 1995, for future growth, at least in the short run (1995-2000) and how regional differences in this growth rate might affect LEP adults' need for adult education services.

There are six major factors which affect the growth and regional distribution of the LEP population in need: a) fertility, b) international migration, c) within-state migration, d) differential rates of high school dropout, e) impact of current service programs on English-language facility, f) natural "background" rate of English acquisition. In principle, regional differences in each growth component would tend to shift the distribution of the LEP

population in need of adult education services. In practice, there are no adequate data sets for measuring how each of these components might separately affect service demand.

In this section of the report we discuss, first, overall growth in the LEP population needing services and, secondly, how differential rates of growth in different areas of the state might shift the "snapshot" presented in **Table 1-1** and **Map 1-1** of the LEP adult education population distribution.

H-1 Growth in the LEP Population Needing Adult Education Services from 1990-1995 and 1996-2000.

The task of estimating overall growth of the LEP population needing services is highly speculative for a number of reasons. Mexico-U.S. migration rates were very high at the beginning of the decade (as a consequence of IRCA) but they have been decreasing subsequently. In the decade from 1990-2000, California overall population is estimated to increase by 21.3%.[43] However, it is clear that LEP adult education service population growth is significantly higher than that of the population as a whole. We estimate that the LEP population in need of adult education services will grow by 45-55% over the decade -- as a result of continuing immigration and higher-than-average school dropout rates for limited English teenagers (both foreign-born and U.S.-born).[44] The substantial uncertainties about growth during the decade stem from the volatility of both immigration and school dropout rates.

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[43] California Department of Finance, Population Projection for California Counties 1980-2020 with age/sex detail to 2020: DOF Baseline 1986.

[44] This is based on a review of data on immigration prepared by Jo Ann Intili and Ed Kissam for the Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit, "Working Paper #2: Data Inventory and Preliminary Analyses to Support CDE Strategic Planning for Adult Education." The increase of immigrants in need of adult education services estimated in their analysis (1.6 million) must be adjusted downward to yield a LEP growth rate to account for: a) immigrants who arrived being fully proficient in English and b) acquisition of English proficiency (moving low-educational attainment out of the LEP sub-population into the population of English-proficient persons needing adult education services). Taking into account the "bulge" of LEP children and teenagers arriving in California in the late 1980's and early 1990's whose English-language acquisition is likely to be quite rapid, our preliminary estimate is that approximately 400,000 of the 1.6 million new low-educational attainment immigrants in the decade will move out of the LEP universe, leaving a net growth of 1.2 million or 57%.

Even given the very serious data and analytic uncertainties surrounding this preliminary estimate of growth in the LEP population in need of adult education services, the growth rate for the LEP adult education service population is more than double and possibly almost triple the growth rate for the general population. This, of course, has important implications for adult education planning. It indicates that the current LEP service population (January 1, 1997) is probably about 2.7 million persons.[35] By the end of the decade from 1990-2000, there will have been an increase of about 1.1 million persons from the 1990 baseline estimate of approximately 2.0 to 2.1 million persons to yield a Year 2000 LEP adult education population of about 3.1 to 3.3 million persons.

H-2 Impact of Regional Differences in LEP Growth on Statewide Distribution of the LEP Service Population

The specific planning question posed by the California Department of Education relating to the distribution of the LEP population needing adult education services is, inextricably tied to the issue of growth in the service population because there will be an increasing concentration of LEP adults in areas with higher-than-average growth and, conversely, decreasing concentrations in other areas.

What we do know, is that the differential impact of two of the six factors determining LEP adult education service population growth (international and within-state migration) are likely to be the primary drivers of adult education LEP population re-distribution.[36] Extensive research shows that migration networks play a major role in determining flows from sending regions to receiving regions and it certainly appears that some networks are currently more vigorous than others in sending migrants northward to California.

Variations in degree and type of labor market demand, relative quality of housing accommodations, and community context can also play an important role in determining

[35] We assume that immigration was higher in the period from 1990-1995 than it will be in the 1996-2000 period. This is consistent with the latest INS estimates (INS News Release, February 7, 1997).

[36] There are, in fact, likely to be differential rates of demographic growth (depending on the age structure and composition of the LEP population in different areas), high school dropout, and impact of current service programs but the data for quantifying the overall contribution each makes to the growth of the LEP population in need of adult education services is tenuous, making calculation of population re-distribution as a result of differential growth infeasible for the moment.

the distribution of the California LEP adult education population. We have been told, for example, that there is a substantial out-migration process underway as Fresno County Hmong who have had difficulty in finding employment in Fresno County, move to North Carolina.[37] In general, these migration processes have a dynamic of their own; once initiated, migration flows tend to continue until conditions, once again, change.

The best data available to this study for the purposes of analyzing possible shifts in the 1990 distribution of the California LEP population stems from the California Department of Education's Home Language Survey (HLS).[38] These data provide a direct measure of changes from 1990-1995 in enrollment in children living in households which speak languages other than English. The limitation of these data is that: a) there is no breakout of households which are bilingual (i.e., speak a language other than English at home but where children's' parents are proficient in English), b) there are no data on the educational attainment of adults in the household (i.e., one or both LEP parents may be well-educated and unlikely to use the adult education system) and c) data provide a proxy only for differential regional growth of one age cohort and sub-population (ie. families with school-ag children) within the LEP population. Nonetheless, these data are likely to provide a better proxy for differential growth rates than either the Current Population Survey (CPS) or Department of Finance projections for the general population.[39]

Table 1-3 below shows growth in numbers of children living in Spanish-speaking households (Col. 1), households speaking an Asian language (Col. 2) and our estimates of the implied growth in each county's LEP adult education population. For the purpose of analyzing differential growth we estimate the growth rate of the LEP adult education population with children as approximately 44% of the growth rate of numbers of children

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[37] Interview with Mr. Lue Yang, Director, Center for New Americans, Fresno.

[38] We believe the HLS proxy for differential growth somewhat under-estimates growth in California's labor-intensive agricultural counties, as farmworker areas have a disproportionate number of young monolingual Spanish-speaking and limited English Latino men without children. A more sophisticated model, including secondary adjustment for this sub-population might be feasible using Quarterly Agricultural Survey (QALS), Census of Agriculture (COA), and National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) data but this adjustment is beyond the scope of this study. We are grateful to Don Villarejo of the California Institute of Rural Studies for outlining an analytic strategy which might be used to perform this adjustment.

[39] The CPS sample size is not adequate to yield reliable estimates for limited English sub-populations in smaller counties. The Department of Finance projections rely on a sophisticated model but provide county-by-county breakouts for the entire population.

living in non-English K-12 households (i.e., 1995 HLS #'s of non-English households minus 1990 #'s).[40] More refined projections, using a model which incorporates changing fertility, refined assumptions about linguistic assimilation, the changing educational attainment of the immigrant population, and adjustments for changes in the population age structure might yield a different exact rate of growth but would not change our overall analysis of the changing distribution of the LEP adult education population.

The resulting estimation of the shifting geographical distribution of the LEP adult education service population based on HLS data is consistent with a mean statewide growth of 21% in the LEP adult education population over the 5-year period from 1990-1995 (42% over the decade) as a result of increases in the numbers of limited English low-education adults with school-age children[41] Remembering that this increase stems only from one population component (adults 21-40 with school-age children), the implied growth rate appears to be roughly consistent with the estimated total decade-long growth rate of 45-55%. This, in turn, implies that young and middle-age adults without children, older foreign-born adults joining their children in the U.S., and school dropouts contribute another 5-15% to the growth of the LEP adult education service population over the decade.

For the purposes of analyzing changes in the distribution of the LEP population, it is not crucial to determine actual growth rate but only variations around the mean. Given the statewide "benchmark" of 21% growth from 1990-1995, county growth rates above the mean imply growing concentration of LEP adults potentially needing services, while growth rates below the mean imply gradual decreases in concentrations.

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[40] This analysis requires an initial estimate of the proportion of the LEP adult education population who are represented in the CBEDS data on non-English speaking households with school-age children. CASAS' ABE/321 data provide the best basis for this estimate. The CASAS data show that about two-thirds (66%) of the 321 sample are between 21-45 years of age, the age span we take to represent the age cohort with school-age children. However, not all of this population, in fact, have children. Our preliminary estimate is that about one-third of this population do not have school-age children (though they may have pre-school children, college-age children, or no children).

[41] An important consideration is that there was disproportionate growth in Spanish-speaking households with children in the period immediately after 1990 as a result of the family unification provisions of IRCA. The contribution this made to HLS growth is difficult to quantify as family reunification began before 1988 and still continues.

Table 1-3
Differential Growth Rates in LEP Population
Needing Adult Education Services

County	Univ Inflator HLS 1990-1995 Spanish	Univ. inflator HLS 1990-1995 Asian	Est. LEP growth 1990-1995 Weighted HLS Col. 2+Col. 3 X .44
Alameda	1.576	1.290	19%
Alpine	NS	NS	NS
Amador	NS	NS	NS
Butte	1.684	2.032	38%
Calaveras	NS	NS	NS
Colusa	1.893	NS	39%
Contra Costa	1.876	.937	27%
Del Norte	1.50	1.368	19%
El Dorado	1.837	NS	37%
Fresno	1.741	1.415	26%
Glenn	1.586	1.516	25%
Humboldt	1.96	1.247	26%
Imperial	1.1859	1.217	9%
Inyo	2.918	NS	41%
Kern	1.722	1.779	32%
Kings	1.4582	1.628	20%
Lake	1.803	NS	35%
Lassen	NS	NS	NS
Los Angeles	1.3973	1.160	16%
Madera	1.8742	NS	38%
Marin	2.383	1.432	50%
Mariposa	NS	NS	NS
Mendocino	1.6187	NS	27%
Merced	1.6056	1.483	25%
Modoc	2.0758	NS	47%
Mono	NS	NS	NS
Monterey	1.4145	1.089	16%

Table 1-3 (Continued)

County	Univ Inflator HLS 1990-1995 Spanish	Univ. inflator HLS 1990-1995 Asian	Est. LEP growth 1990-1995 Weighted HLS Col. 2+Col. 3 X .44
Napa	1.9426	1.202	39%
Nevada	NS	NS	NS
Orange	1.5795	1.496	25%
Placer	2.2447	NS	55%
Plumas	NS	NS	NS
Riverside	1.8263	1.461	35%
Sacramento	2.0851	1.844	40%
San Benito	1.1377	NS	6%
San Bernardino	1.9307	1.387	38%
San Diego	1.6155	1.297	24%
San Francisco	1.0175	.95	-1%
San Joaquin	1.6105	1.133	14%
San Luis Obispo	1.4565	.78	18%
San Mateo	1.5653	1.220	21%
Santa Barbara	1.5972	1.360	26%
Santa Clara	1.5628	1.467	23%
Santa Cruz	1.3325	.996	14%
Shasta	2.931	1.424	25%
Sierra	NS	NS	NS
Siskiyou	NS	NS	NS
Solano	1.451	1.241	16%
Sonoma	1.9155	1.023	33%
Stanislaus	1.6253	.995	18%
Sutter	2.229	1.828	47%
Tehama	1.6959	NS	31%
Trinity	NS	NS	NS
Tulare	1.8341	1.21	32%
Tuolumne	NS	NS	NS
Ventura	1.4941	1.272	21%
Yolo	1.6578	1.060	22%
Yuba	2.004	1.749	36%
STATE GROWTH RATE	**49%**	**30%**	**21%**

** HLS data is noted as non-significant (NS) if the 1995 cell was <100.*

Table 1-3 suggests that California is experiencing a diffusion of limited English proficient adults out of older foci of in-migration into areas which are more recent migration destinations. Because the very large, urban Southern California counties have such a high proportion of the state's limited English population, many of the smaller counties are above

the statewide mean for the LEP adult education population growth. Because Mexican immigration makes up the majority of California in-migration, the Mexico-U.S. migration patterns tend to drive overall shifts in the distribution of the LEP population.

In general, rural areas with strong agricultural labor demand (e.g., Tulare, Fresno) have high rates of increase in the LEP adult education population as would be expected but, because there is a smaller baseline LEP population, in some other rural areas, the rate of growth is even higher in several Sacramento Valley counties (e.g., Colusa, Sutter, Yuba, Shasta).

It is important to note that the Los Angeles County LEP adult education population appears to be growing much slower than in adjacent counties such as Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino which have some of the highest LEP growth rates in the state. A similar process seems to be occurring in the San Francisco Bay area, as LEP growth burgeons in Marin, Napa, Sonoma and Contra Costa counties (but not Solano) while remaining near the mean in older settlement areas such as San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and Alameda Counties.

Some areas which diverge from our general expectations in terms of growth include Imperial County (lower than expected), Sacramento County (higher than expected), San Francisco County (lower than expected).

The variance in LEP growth rates appears to be consistent with migration research on patterns in Mexico-U.S. migration networks and recent changes in these patterns. For example, the extremely high growth rate in Madera is consistent with research on accelerating out-migration from Oaxaca via Baja California and Sinaloa to Madera (and other areas of the San Joaquin Valley). In other areas, there is evidence of other growth inducers, for example, labor market demand for cheap immigrant labor (in construction, gardening, and housecleaning) and low-cost housing which has led to dramatic increases in the Mexican-origin population of the San Rafael canal community area and West Marin. The relatively low growth rates of LEP adults in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties reflect, in part, the fact that earlier waves of migration populated these rural areas with Mexican immigrants, many of whose descendants are now bilingual.

The impact of successive waves of Mexico-U.S. migration on the composition of California's immigrant population, as evidenced in the lower growth rate of older immigrant-receiving areas in comparison to newer immigrant-receiving areas is, we believe, an important factor in understanding the specific needs of different LEP populations in California. These differences are discussed in connection with the findings from our case studies vis-a-vis the profile of needs for these distinct ethnic groups and immigrant networks.

Summary -- Distribution of the LEP Population in California

The "universe of need" for adult education services to limited English-proficient (LEP) adults is much greater than the current capacity of California's adult education system. While not all LEP adults will seek services, the level of service demand among LEP adults is relatively high and California adult education will face many challenges in responding to demand, particularly in the context of welfare reform which will put a strain on system resources for both native-born English-proficient and immigrant populations.

Macro-level data on the distribution of LEP adults in need of adult education services provide a sound empirical foundation for considering possible system-level responses to better meet their needs. Generic efforts to continually accomplish more with limited resources can be streamlined and made more effective. Serious strategic planning designed to re-invent the current "one size fits all" system of adult education must be instituted in order to use limited resources effectively. The data on numbers and distribution of LEP adults indicate the need for an articulated service delivery system designed to afford each group among California's diverse adult education population easy access to an adult learning "package" of services configured specifically to respond to their needs.

A first step in a rational planning process, since there are now adequate data on patterns of service need will be to re-examine funding levels and funding allocation since the adult education funding "cap" is a major impediment to serious efforts to respond to current needs. The need for effective adult education services for LEP adults continues to grow. The analyses in this chapter provide initial guidance to identify "hot spots" of growth in the population most likely to need services. The need to invest in the services which can assist LEP adults in developing the skills they need to function at their full

potential in California society is not a marginal policy concern at this point in California history. An effective response is critical since the combination of limited education, limited English proficiency, and ethnicity, seriously constrains individuals' and entire communities' ability to respond with agility to the challenges they face.

Chapter 2

Limited English-proficient Adults' Learning Needs and Plans for Continuing Education

Introduction and Overview

The Adult Education Policy and Planning Unit requested information on the "special needs" of LEP adults. This type of information is crucial as a basis for systematically striving to develop an adult education service delivery system which becomes more responsive and cost-effective by devising improved program designs which better target services to the needs of those they serve. Aguirre International has responded to the question about needs of LEP adults by exploring several different dimensions of limited English-proficient learners' needs. The primary dimensions of LEP adult learners' needs addressed in this chapter are the following:

1. LEP adults' current skills -- as evidenced by educational attainment, and English-language competencies -- in relation to typical skills demands.[1]

2. Specific constraints experienced by LEP adults in different broad "domains" of societal functioning (workplace, family life, community participation, lifelong learning) as a result of their limited English-language ability.

3. Adult learning priorities as expressed by LEP adults who intend to seek additional adult education services and as inferred from external factors (e.g. adult education services in connection with applying for citizenship).

4. Perceived barriers to participating in an adult education program as a basis for planning to make services more accessible.

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[1] By "skills" we mean the full spectrum of functional competencies, including English-language ability, "literacy" both in terms of what the SCANS refers to as "foundation" skills and higher-order cognitive skills such as those identified in the SCANS framework (i.e., problem-solving, teamwork, information acquisition and analysis, system understanding, etc.).

5. Projections of total demand and phasing of demand for services (as distinguished from "universe of need") to serve as a basis for projecting and planning for "just enough" service capacity.

The study questions about LEP adults' needs and what they need from the California adult education system, encompass several different dimensions -- "what" LEP adults must learn to confront the challenges they face, what support they must receive to access the system and be successful learners, and how they might best be helped in the course of lifelong adult learning. From a practical perspective, the California adult education system needs information on potentially competing strategies to respond to LEP adults and overcome whatever service access barriers they may face. Thus, in **Chapter 3**, we explore the utility of a variety of program design strategies as a way of responding to and overcoming or, at least, mitigating the difficulties encountered by LEP adults in accessing adult education services. **Chapter 3** explores both possible modifications to classroom-based instruction and utilization of non-classroom learning modalities as a means for facilitating access to adult learning and as a means of broadening the "menu" of learning options and implementing a vision of "anytime, anyplace" lifelong learning. In **Chapter 4** considers the special needs of several different sub-groups among LEP adults.

In recognition of the heterogeneity of the LEP population in California, the study was also designed to permit detailed analyses of the ways in which different LEP sub-populations' needs might differ. At the same time, the study recognized that there might, also, be differences in LEP adults' learning needs as a result of the community context in which they live their lives, as well as a result of their personal aspirations The study design has focused primarily on the task of describing and delineating LEP adults' needs; we have only secondarily considered the ways in which LEP adults' needs might differ from those of fully English-proficient adult learners and might, thus, be considered "special" as distinguished from those of the overall adult education population

In connection with our exploration of the primary issue of LEP adults' educational service needs, we sought, wherever appropriate, to elicit respondents' recommendations and suggestions as to how the adult education system might best respond to their needs. While these discussions ranged well beyond the central question of learners' needs, our hope is that they provide some practical guidance for program design efforts and development of strategic recommendations to better respond to the high level of need.

Study Approach

Our analysis of LEP adults' learning needs is based on three distinct sources: a) review of the relevant literature, b) the study's Spanish-speaking Household Survey (SSHS), and c) focus groups with LEP adults from three of the top ten language-minority groups (speakers of Spanish, Khmer, and Hmong. As Spanish-speakers make up four-fifths of California's LEP population, the most extensive primary data collection efforts related to collecting and analyzing data from the Spanish-speaking Household Survey in three case study communities (Long Beach, Redwood City, and Sanger). Details of the research literature review can be found in the bibliography accompanying the study). Discussion of the SSHS methodology and detailed information on focus groups is reported in **Appendix 2**.

Background -- The Social Environment in which LEP Adults Live and Work

If the core mission of adult learning programs is to better prepare adults to function in the social environment in which they live and work, it is important to have a clear recognition of the nature of that environment, the parameters it establishes for California LEP adults' leaning objectives, how informal "background" learning and skills acquisition take place, and the implications these considerations may have for designing effective programs.[2] A key issue is social mobility -- how to overcome educational and linguistic constraints on moving about in society, across class and ethnic boundaries, across occupational boundaries for career advancement, so as to achieve full social and economic integration.

A dramatic feature of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual California is that there are patterns of cultural diversity which are, at once, orderly and chaotic. These communities are both complex and constantly changing -- a virtual kaleidoscope of the social universe in which we live. This fundamental fact of California's societal environment has profound, but inadequately recognized, implications for designing adult learning programs for LEP adults.

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[2] We include in "social environment", economic interactions, including the workplace learning demands which have preoccupied public policy regarding adult learning for the past decade. Kissam and Intili argue in their foundation paper for revisions to California's strategic plan for adult education that the entire social environment is now a "high performance" one of the sort described by the SCANS framework which was originally developed to articulate workplace competencies.

Traditionally, social policy has been shaped, sometimes tacitly, sometimes explicitly, around a mission of bringing immigrants, and other native-born "marginal" populations into a "mainstream" America. However, the reality of contemporary California is that there is no longer a "mainstream", an agora perhaps, but not really a common culture instead, there are multiple, intertwined, strands of social interaction -- a pluralistic, multi-cultural society. A "virtual" geography of multiple superimposed social network affiliations has come to replace, or at least, powerfully condition, LEP adults' experience living in America.

The research literature shows substantial progress in recent decades in understanding how successive waves of immigrants, competing with each other and with low-income native-born populations, have become concentrated in regions of California, in communities within those regions, and in neighborhoods within those communities. At the macro-level some researchers refer to this process as "peripheralization at the core", referring to the process through which developed economies, by importing labor from "peripheral" regions of the global economy (lesser-developed countries) take on, themselves, many of characteristics of those societies.[1] This analytic framework is particularly appropriate for considering adult education practices as it provides some basis for going beyond rhetoric to consider what the demands on a "world-class" education system might be and what specific challenges California faces as a leading "nation-state" of the Pacific Rim region.

At the community level, two distinct but related lines of thinking from the research on migration and immigrant social experience are particularly relevant for conceptualizing the needs of the limited English-proficient, mostly foreign-born, population needing adult education services. The first line of thinking relates to the formation and existence of immigrant "enclaves." The second line of thinking relates to the role played by family, extended family, and village networks in immigrant communities. Paradoxically, immigrant social networks which flourish in the immigrant enclaves where LEP adults are concentrated provide both benefits and barriers to individuals' and families' well-being and personal development.

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[1] Detailed expositions of this concept can be found in the work of Saskia Sassen-Koob, Michael Kearney, and Roger Rouse.

In practical terms, the existence of immigrant enclaves serves to attenuate the pressures toward cultural assimilation. Immigrant enclaves provide their residents with a variety of crucial support services while, at the same time, constraining these residents' sphere of influence. In a real sense these social boundaries/borders are more powerful dividing lines than nominal national borders. In terms of language learning, one aspect of this situation is that many immigrants can live and thrive for indefinite periods in California (or other areas of the U.S.) without learning English.[4] The existence of immigrant enclaves is, of course, also a key factor in the development of groups of U.S.-born limited English-proficient persons who have lived most of their lives in such communities.

At the same time that immigrant enclaves provide a supportive environment , they seriously limit the social, economic, and geographic mobility of their residents. For example, many of the jobs available in immigrant enclaves are easily accessed via social networks, make relatively minimal skills demands on those who hold them, and require very little English-speaking ability. Yet, at the same time, these jobs provide little or no rewards for skills brought to them (while skillfully making use of a variety of job-holders' personal abilities and informally-acquired skills). They have virtually no upward career mobility and are characterized consistently by unstable employment, work and contracting practices designed to constantly "ratchet up" workers' rate of production or work, and interactions in which employers or supervisors often feel free to behave arbitrarily.[5]

Immigrants' social networks play a paradoxical role within these enclaves. They provide a wide range of support services to individuals and families living in a high-risk environment, constantly threatened with cash flow crises, loss of employment, and child-care demands. They provide a fountain of advice on responding to crises, problem-solving intervention, informal instruction, social know-how, and practical knowledge -- some of it accurate, some inaccurate. In an informal but genuine sense these networks are the primary employers of persons within them, steering newcomers to places where they can be employed, establishing connections for employment, arranging housing,

[4] In the late 1980's Philip Martin summarized theoretical work as to how immigrants' "colonization" of the U.S. farm labor market has gradually excluded native-born workers. These labor markets are "sheltered" in the sense that outsiders cannot enter them but they are, also, objectively worse in terms of working conditions and wages, constituting what many now refer to as "tertiary" labor market.

[5] Some enclave employment, for example small entrepreneurial businesses, may provide opportunities to build skills, particularly for young bilingual/bicultural workers who work in their families' establishments, but there remain constraints on economic advancement.

transportation in many cases, and mediating disputes. They, also, are the primary educators and socializers for newly-arrived immigrants and refugees. While they provide benefits, they also make constant demands on those who participate in them because the foundation for these networks is mutual reciprocity. Accepting help imposes the burden of providing help. As is the case in almost all low-income neighborhoods with high unemployment, persons who, to the outside view might seem "idle" are, in fact, juggling a variety of obligations. Within the milieu of immigrant enclaves, adult education's goal of providing a fulcrum for achieving social mobility includes, among other things, freedom from reliance on cultural intermediaries such as scribes, one's children, one's relatives.

While social networks play a key supportive role in immigrant enclaves, their functioning is, often, somewhat or seriously compromised in California communities.[*] The pace and stress of contemporary life in California puts severe strains on the fabric of networks, giving rise to chronic glitches as canons of mutual reciprocity are violated, or obligations, if not denied, are postponed, or only partially complied with due to personal crises or competing demands. Also, in the context of U.S. life, many of the transactions which, traditionally, were based on mutual reciprocity have now become monetarized. Hondagneu-Sotelo's research in one of our case study communities (Redwood City), for example, details how housekeepers "sell" their contacts with well-to-do patrons to newcomers, exchanging unpaid "help" with tasks or money for brokering new contacts and teaching their mentees the tricks of the trade. Scribes, via implicit reference to traditional mores about "helping out", sell their services to low-literate limited English-proficient customers, providing, in addition to letter-writing, advice on how to fraudulently complete unemployment insurance forms, and file fraudulent asylum petitions to secure work authorization -- "benefits" with serious negative potential for their customers.

Competition among distinct family-village networks in immigrant enclaves exacerbates social and economic inequities as prevailing networks aggressively assume control of employment opportunities and heighten tensions. Constant emphasis on social

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[*] Cecilia Menjivar of U.C. Berkeley is the only researcher we know who is working explicitly on the nature of network breakdown (of Salvadorans in San Francisco) but this theme is an important one in Roger Rouse's analysis of life in one of our case communities, Redwood City. Kissam has concentrated on the transformation of traditional extended family networks into mechanisms for labor recruitment and control in the context of the Florida farm labor market but the same considerations apply in both rural and urban California.

boundaries between distinct networks gives rise to gangs or neighborhood rivalries. Consequently, for many immigrant workers (just as for the elite) specific career options, trajectories, and learning objectives may be conditioned as much by the family or village network to which they are attached as by generic labor market skills demands.

The situation of refugees is distinct from that of other immigrants in many important respects; while social networks continue to play an important role in their economic and personal lives, many families have been decimated by violence and, inevitably, social support networks of refugees have been more tenuous. The two refugee populations represented in our community case study focus groups -- Cambodians and Hmong -- have had especially traumatic experiences. This has made their cultural and social integration more difficult and stressful than other groups. Researchers also point to migration through refugee camps and intermediate countries as an experience which has contributed to the difficulties they currently face. Southeast Asian refugees' lack of access to the social networks which arrange employment for newly-arriving Mexicans and newcomers among many other groups of immigrants has also given rise to labor market problems and reliance on public assistance among these groups continues much higher than among Latino immigrants -- according to 1990 census data, as high as 45% among Cambodians and 49% among Laotians. Disruption of social networks which structured life in their country of origin, coupled with difficulties competing in the U.S. labor market, has also contributed to inter-generational tensions between limited English parents and bilingual or English-dominant children.

In summary, community context exerts a powerful hold upon the lives of the limited English-proficient adult learners served by adult schools. A central finding from the current study is that community context strongly modulates individuals' learning objectives, needs, priorities, and preferred modes of learning. This finding, in turn, has many practical implications for the California adult education system in re-conceptualizing its strategy for overcoming the barriers faced by LEP adults in accessing adult education services and, more importantly, making significant improvements in their functional skills as a result of participating in a formal learning program.

The extensive sociological and anthropological research on California immigrants and the communities they live in, together with the research in this study, highlights the principle that program design, curriculum content, and instructional methodology cannot be

considered in isolation. The sterile construct of a curriculum based on an educational commitment to building "life skills", "teaching survival English", adopting a "VESL approach", or even "developing SCANS-related competencies" must be replaced with a commitment to responsive adult learning programs which structure their service delivery system to address more concrete and contextualized real-world problem-solving than is currently the case.[7]

Three Case Study Communities -- Long Beach, Redwood City, and Sanger

Our three case study communities were chosen to represent three distinct strata of California immigrant-receiving areas -- urban Southern California, rural Central California, and urban Northern California. Each has a distinctive pattern of immigrant settlement, a characteristic mix of job opportunities, and a characteristic ethnic and socioeconomic mix. At the same time, there are many similarities which serve to give a general idea of the "typical" social environments in which LEP adults live and work.

We chose these communities, in part, because each had an existing adult school which was providing services to LEP adults. We felt this provided an opportunity both to determine what the extent of unmet service need might be in communities where there was already an established service provider while, at the same time, exploring how well these service providers were responding to LEP adults' learning needs. This methodological strategy clearly provides the most optimistic picture of the system's functioning since many communities have virtually no adult education services.[8]

Long Beach.

Long Beach is an urban area of Los Angeles county -- a city of about 500,000. There are within the city limits a variety of sharp socioeconomic and ethnic demarcations.

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[7] One problem faced by adult education instructors lies in the process of translating an abstract, generic, framework of learning objectives (or even program standards) into concrete practice. The problem is similar to that faced by adult learners themselves in deploying "generic" problem-solving strategies in novel environments.

[8] For details, see Youth, Adult and Alternative Educational Services Division, Adult Education Planning and Policy Unit, California Department of Education, "Special Report to the Legislature on Adult Education Reforms", January, 1996. By 1994-1995, only 74 of 117 "zero-capped" districts eligible to apply for start-up funding under the provisions of AB 1321 had done so. Each district which has applied has now been authorized to operate at 30 units of ADA.

The city has a large Latino population, the largest concentration of Cambodians in the United States, and numerous African-American neighborhoods.[9] Its labor market provides many employment opportunities in tourist-based service occupations, manufacturing industries which typically make use of immigrant labor, as well as extensive demand for warehouse workers due to the high volume of shipping coming into the shipping terminal.

Both the Latino and Cambodian enclaves are well-enough established to have generated some employment in small businesses, restaurants, public service agencies, and stores serving their communities. Cambodians, in particular, have developed businesses such as donut shops, ethnic food stores, and used car dealerships which generate a good amount of employment.

Census data show that Hispanics live in many neighborhoods of Long Beach but the densest concentrations of limited English-proficient Latinos is immediately adjacent to Long Beach's elegant downtown. Cambodian, Latino, and African-American neighborhoods overlap in some areas, most notably, along the Pacific Coast Highway in central Long Beach. In Long Beach, as in other immigrant-receiving communities, there are "hot spots" where limited English families concentrate but, also, pockets of relatively isolated families, or individuals.[10] There is a fairly high level of tension and conflict among Cambodian, Mexican-American, and African-American gangs.

While housing, employment opportunities, and community infrastructure in Long Beach are much better than in many inner-city neighborhoods, many of the Latino and Cambodian residents complain that crime is a constant threat and gangs are a high-profile part of the community.

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[9] 1990 census data show the city to be 24% Hispanic, 14% Asian or Pacific Islander and 14% African-American.

[10] The SSHS sampling design is a multi-stage one which assured that areas where Spanish-speaking households represented a relatively low proportion of the population would be represented (as low as 50%) but it was infeasible to include all neighborhoods (e.g. even those with only 5% Spanish-speaking households). Thus, the sample is likely to very well represent the low-education adult education population but include less LEP adults with more schooling who are more likely to live in more integrated neighborhoods.

Our community survey shows that, within the Long Beach Spanish-speaking LEP adult population, immigrants from "core-sending" regions of Mexico, Jalisco, Michoacan, Zacatecas, and Guanajuato predominate, making up 55% of the survey respondents. About 10% of our survey respondents were Central American, and 4% U.S.-born Hispanics. Thus, the Long Beach SSHS population appears to be highly representative of the Latino LEP population of urban Southern California. The Cambodian focus groups were purposively selected so as to approximate the demographic profile of the Long Beach Cambodian community.

While some of the Cambodian refugees are relatively well educated, most have had a difficult and traumatic set of life experiences, beginning with the extreme violence of the Pol Pot regime which few were fortunate enough to escape without losing family members. Many, after growing up in Cambodia, spent a long period of their lives in refugee camps before arriving in the United States. Community leaders and social agency workers we talked to in the Cambodian community stressed the need for community mental health services, pervasive problems of inter-generational communication, and competition with other groups for jobs as challenges faced by the community.[11] Like other refugee populations, many Cambodians in Long Beach feel threatened by the loss of public assistance due to the provisions of the welfare reform legislation.

Sanger and Southeastern Fresno

Sanger is a medium-size town (with a population of about 20,000) on the Eastside of the San Joaquin Valley, about 10 miles southeast of Fresno. We chose the community to represent a stratum of immigrant enclaves which remain rural but which have an economy which is becoming somewhat diversified. While we conducted the household survey in Sanger, we expanded our definition of case study area to include the large concentration of Hmong in southeastern Fresno and conducted focus groups with this population to achieve more diversity.

Sanger is perhaps best defined as a community at an intermediate stage of economic development. It is, to some extent a bedroom community of Fresno but, at the same time, it retains much of its character as a packing house town supplying farm labor to the

[11] For example, PIC-sponsored training programs in the area are focusing on training for displaced aerospace workers.

surrounding tree fruit and grape industries. Fruit processing and packing sheds run along Academy Ave., a north-south boulevard along the railroad tracks and the original, small, compact downtown is a stone's throw from these sheds. At its northwestern edge, the town is spreading out into several new shopping centers Some researchers (Rochin, 1995; Rochin and Lopez, 1996) refer to it and other similar communities as *colonias*. Yet Sanger is actually much more diverse socioeconomically than other rural Latino communities which began as farm labor camps; larger than small hamlets such as Del Rey or Lindsay, more diversified than neighboring communities like Parlier, it is still less developed than the nearby towns of Selma and other communities along Route 99.

The overwhelming majority of Sanger's population is Hispanic, a relatively high proportion of the community is bilingual.[12] An important, small, but distinct ethnic group in the area are Japanese-Americans; they are prominent in the area as growers and packers. Sanger is the most English-oriented of the communities surveyed in the Spanish-speaking Household Survey; while most of the town is of Mexican origin, there are growing cultural and social tensions between English-dominant Mexican-Americans and more recently-arrived Mexican immigrants who compete with local workers for jobs. Although Sanger is predominantly Hispanic, its local government has only two Hispanic council members.

The socioeconomic structure of Sanger reflects its history. Downtown Sanger consists primarily of established Mexican-American families while east of the railroad tracks and packing sheds, particularly in the colonias of La Ardillera and La Chancla there are more recently-arrived Mexican immigrants.[13] A significant minority population of non-Hispanics live in more affluent developments on the western and northern edges of town.

While Sanger is a beautiful and apparently peaceful town, residents complain that gangs are exerting a greater and greater influence over community life. As is the case in other rural communities in the area which had their origin as farm labor camps, the SSHS shows that in Sanger most (51%) of the Spanish-speaking LEP population is from "core sending" areas of Mexico -- Michoacan, Jalisco, Guanajuato, and Durango. Also,

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[12] The 1980 census data show only 73% of Sanger's residents to be of Hispanic origin. We believe this is a very low figure and that a more accurate estimate would be in the range of 80-90%.

[13] Ruben Navarette's fascinating personal chronicle, **A Darker Shade of Crimson**, provides unique retrospective insight into these social and economic divisions from the perspective of a Sanger Mexican-American educator who went on from Sanger High School to Harvard.

reflecting the area's history, Texas-born Mexican-Americans and immigrants from northeastern Mexico (Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas) are significant social networks within the Hispanic population. The Sanger survey respondents also included 2 Salvadorans.

The Hmong, despite their rural origins, are concentrated primarily in urban low-income areas of Fresno. This concentration of Hmong is one of the largest Hmong settlements in the United States. Although many of the Hmong have lived in the United States for 20 years now, like other Southeast Asian refugees, they have found social and economic integration very challenging. The cultural distance between a rural society without a written language to information-intense America remains formidable. One community leader, for example, in talking with us about how Hmong traditionally learned the skills they needed as adults succinctly told us how boys literally followed in their fathers' footsteps guiding water buffalo and how girls learned needlework from their mothers.

Difficulties experienced by the Hmong in integrating into California society have led to strong cultural maintenance and we were told that much decision-making continues to be collective, with "elders", leaders in extended family networks playing an important role. Hmong social and economic integration appears to be a multi-generation process, with younger, bilingual Hmong playing an important role but not without some measure of inter-generational tension between traditional ways and assimilation into California emerging multi-ethnic society.

Like other refugee groups, the Hmong have had to rely quite heavily on public assistance. When we were in Fresno in the late summer of 1996, there was a great deal of fear and anger about the forthcoming ban on SSI for legal immigrants. From the perspective of at least one community leader, the Hmong are experiencing increasing difficulties in competing with Latino immigrants for employment in the low-wage occupations which are most easily accessible to LEP immigrants. One response has been a new stream of secondary migration as some extended family groups leave California for areas where their network connections give them easier access to employment; the new destination we heard about as we talked is North Carolina.

Redwood City

Redwood City is a city of about 75,000 persons, a major immigrant-receiving area, halfway between San Francisco and San Jose. The population of the city as a whole is predominantly non-Hispanic but Hispanics make up 24% of the population. As in many other areas of the San Francisco Bay area, the Latino, predominantly Mexican, neighborhood of Redwood City/Fair Oaks is one which is very concentrated in a small area immediately adjacent to extremely affluent communities (e.g. Atherton and Palo Alto to the west and southwest) and a predominantly African-American community (e.g. East Palo Alto). The area of densest Mexican settlement, Fair Oaks, is actually in an unincorporated area of San Mateo county. Because of its proximity to affluent neighborhoods, household services, where women work as maids and men as gardeners, landscapers, or construction laborers, are leading occupations. At the same time, local businesses employ immigrants in light manufacturing, restaurant and hotel work, and other industries.

The development and social dynamics of Redwood City as a Mexican settlement have been extensively analyzed by two anthropologists -- Roger Rouse and Pierette Hondagneu-Sotelo -- whose work is on the cutting edge of contemporary research on Mexican immigration to California. In his work, Rouse argues brilliantly that Redwood City is a paradigm of a transnational community originating in Aguililla, Michoacan, a "neighborhood" which forms part of a migrant circuit spanning 2,000 miles.[14] Hondagneu-Sotelo's work explores in great depth the social dynamics of women's networks. Taken together, Rouse's and Hondagneu-Sotelo's work provide a powerful sense of context for understanding the social environment in which Redwood City's Mexican immigrants live and work, the problems they juggle, and how these condition their needs for adult education services.

While Redwood City is part of an Aguillilan transnational circuit, the social environment is not exclusively Aguilillan Other areas also send migrants to Redwood City and there are some conflicts, for example, among Sinaloans and Michoacanos. This competition among networks gives rise to rivalries in Redwood City which are expressed

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[14] See Roger Rouse, "Mexican Migration to the United States: Family Relations in the Development of a Transnational Migrant Circuit", Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1989. See also Rouse's more theoretical discussions of the implications of such transnational communities, "Mexican Migration and the Social Space of Postmodernism", in **Diaspora**, Vol. 1, #1, 1991.

in the form of gang conflicts also. The dominance of one network can be seen in the composition of our Redwood City survey population, as half (50%) are from Michoacan. As in the other communities, Central Americans are a significant minority (8%).

The Spanish-speaking Household Survey shows there are also migrants from Mexican sending areas that have not been so well-represented among California immigrants in the past, namely, Mexico, D.F., and southeastern Mexico (Veracruz and Yucatan). Apparently, just as migrants diffuse from "upstream nodes" in these transnational migration networks, northward migration as a standard economic strategy is diffusing throughout Mexico.[15]

There are small but significant populations of Vietnamese and Chinese in Redwood City. We planned, but did not have an opportunity to conduct, focus groups with local Vietnamese in the area, some of whom speak Chinese as their first language. We understand, nonetheless, that the Vietnamese are having some of the inter-generational tensions that have been problematic for other refugee groups.

LEP Adults' Basic Skills Foundation -- Educational Attainment and English-language ability

One important measure of LEP adults' adult learning needs stems from a comparison of their home-country and subsequent schooling with the skills demands which characterize the social environment in which they must function. While there is a solid and extensive body of research showing the limitations of educational attainment as a measure of competencies, public policy vis-a-vis adult education has relied almost exclusively on schooling as an indicator of need for services. Moreover, debate about immigration policy and formulation of immigrant social policy has looked primarily to educational attainment as a measure of immigrant "quality." Here we review the background literature report on SSHS respondents' educational attainment and English-language skills as indicators of adult education service need. We begin with a review of LEP adults' prior schooling

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[15] Migration from southern Mexico is currently increasing. Several factors, among them the conflicts between the EZLN and the government, seem to be increasing migration flows from Chiapas and emigration from Oaxaca has now pervaded not only California but the entire U.S. farm labor market.

Educational Attainment--Review of the Literature

The literature is clear that the "typical" California adult immigrant who is limited in English is most likely to have an elementary school education. Among the immigrants who were legalized under IRCA, two-thirds (65%) had only 6 years of schooling and more than one-quarter (28%) had 3 years of schooling or less (LaVally, 1993). Chavez found in his San Diego County research a similar level of educational attainment among both Mexican and Central American undocumented immigrants (Chavez, 1992).

Asian immigrants generally have much higher levels of educational attainment than Latino immigrants (California Research Bureau, 1993) but educational attainment varies greatly from group to group. For example, nationally, 34% of Korean immigrants and 30% of Chinese immigrants are college graduates (Rumbaut, 1995). However, many recent rural Chinese immigrants have the same low educational attainment as immigrants from other rural areas. While, in general, Southeast Asian refugees have lower levels of education than other Asian immigrants, educational attainment also varies from one group to another. Rumbaut, reporting on the educational attainment of different groups of parents of immigrant children in the San Diego schools tabulates the proportion of fathers with 8 or less years of schooling by ethnic group -- 79% of Hmong, 69% of Cambodians, 57% of Laotians, 53% of Vietnamese, and 10% of Filipino. Tuan, in writing about Korean high school students in Los Angeles, while not reporting educational attainment of Korean parents, notes that education is very highly valued in South Korea and that many parents, while well-educated, are constrained from access to work commensurate with their skills because of limited English (Tuan, 1995).

Mexican immigrants, who make up the vast majority of LEP adults in California, are among the most poorly educated of immigrants. Mexican are still behind most other immigrant groups in schooling, including immigrants from Central America; they also lag 3 to 5.5 years behind native-born Whites, blacks, and Mexican Americans in schooling (Vernez, 1993). Burgess has noted that schooling is now free and compulsory in Mexico through the age of 15 but that 35% of the population has failed to finish primary school (Burgess, 1993).

Immigrants from rural areas usually have very low levels of educational attainment. Mexican census data (from 1980) show that in many rural areas only two-thirds as many

children graduate from elementary school as in urban areas. For example elementary school graduation rates were 11% in Chiapas, 17% in Michoacan, and 22% in Mexico, D.F. Rouse details some of the dynamics of how households in rural Mexico allocate resources to send only some of their children through elementary school while having others remain at home to help with farming. A Hmong community leader we interviewed described Hmong and Lao peasant families' strategies in similar terms, as hinging on "screening" which children in the family should be sent the long distance to town for schooling.

Analyses of data on California Latino farmworkers from the National Agricultural Workers Survey, show a mean educational level of 6.3 years (Kissam, Gabbard, and Martin, 1993). SSHS respondents in Sanger fall close to this benchmark with a mean educational level of 5.8 years.

The educational attainment of Mexicans is, however, steadily increasing as school facilities are built in more remote rural villages, as education comes to be more universally recognized as having value, and as Mexico shifts away from an agrarian to an industrial economy. Simultaneously, labor market problems in Mexico are contributing to a "brain drain." Our observations in the context of ongoing farm labor research and the SSHS data are that the educational attainment of Mexican immigrants to California is increasing even more rapidly as technically-trained workers and professionals leave Mexico due to the ongoing economic crisis precipitated by the rapid devaluation on the peso in late 1994.[16]

Educational Attainment--Data from the Spanish-speaking Household Survey (SSHS)

Table 2-1 below shows the schooling of SSHS respondents in our three case study communities and in the overall sample. While educational attainment levels are low in comparison to U.S. norms, they are higher than have usually been reported in the literature. The tabulations also included a small number of U.S.-educated LEP adults (<5% of the sample) whose educational attainment is characteristically greater than that of the Mexican-educated respondents.

[16] The increase in migration of Mexicans with higher levels of educational attainment (secundaria, preparatoria, vocacional, normal) most probably began as early as the late 1970's with the first "economic crisis" when urban unemployment began to skyrocket.

Table 2-1
Educational Attainment of SSHS Respondents

Schooling	Long Beach (N=80)	Redwood City (N=95)	Sanger (N=83)	Overall (N=258)
0-6 years	35%	46%	71%	57%
7-11 years	50%	37%	28%	33%
12 or more	15%	17%	1%	11%

** There are 4 missing cases.*

In the SSHS we also asked respondents to assess how well they felt their education had prepared them to function in the four major functional domains where the basic skills they had developed in the course of their previous schooling might affect their current life: work, family life, community life, and lifelong learning. **Table 2-2** below tabulates their responses. These responses reflect both their opinion as to whether schooling is needed as a basis for success in a domain (e.g. family life) and their judgment as to how solid a foundation their schooling had provided them for successful functioning.

Table 2-2
Adequacy of Prior Schooling as a Foundation for Current Needs: 4 Major Domains

Adequacy of Schooling by Domain	Workplace (N=248)	Family Life (N=245)	Community Participation (N=256)	Lifelong Learning (N=222)
Well or very well prepared	19%	38%	---	36%
Fairly well prepared	24%	42%	87%	37%
Poorly or not at all	54%	22%	13%	27%

** 4 respondents responded the workplace question was "not applicable" indicating they were definitively out of the labor force. Others responded with reference to their previous occupation although they were not currently in the labor force. Proportion responding vary as categories listed are post-coding of verbal narrative.*

Table 2-2 has important implications in that it provides at least one basis for considering the content of curriculum designed to respond to LEP adult learners' immediate needs. Perhaps the most disturbing finding is that virtually none of the respondents feel their schooling prepared them well for participating in community life in California.

Spanish-speaking LEP adults' daily lives in the case study communities are conducted in Spanish and primarily involve interactions with friends, co-workers, and family; this area of social interaction is not very problematic. However, SSHS respondents' recognized that their ease in this dealing with the issues of daily life did not easily translate into participation in community dialogue and decision-making which involved getting help with community problems, joining with friends and neighbors to respond to issues of common concern, understanding public debate on issues in the newspapers or on the ballot, communicating perspectives to elected representatives. Most talked about constraints both due to English-language ability and difficulties in understanding "the system."[17]

Although industries which employ limited English-proficient immigrant workers make few immediate skill demands, slightly less than half of the SSHS respondents felt they were well- prepared by their education for the California workplace. While the jobs immigrants perform are low-wage they are not necessarily low-skill. At the same time, these low-wage jobs do not necessarily reward immigrants for the skills they do bring to the workplace because there is often no match between the person's vocational training and their current employment (e.g. the nurse working as a maid).

In contrast, a greater proportion of the SSHS respondents feel their schooling gave them an adequate foundation for functioning in the realm of family life and for lifelong learning. However, these responses reflect, in part, respondents' views that schooling is not necessarily needed to function well in these realms. Many respondents, for example, said that their parents, not school, had prepared them for family life. By the same token, many felt that their personal character and adaptability put them in a good position for lifelong learning, whether or not their schooling had been good. These responses are consistent with the view that, although they may be well-prepared in general, specific skills deficits (most consistently, English) are an impediment to further skills-building (usually vocational training).

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[17] We have found, in a recent study of low-income immigrant Mexican farmworkers in Florida, that very few have the knowledge of the system to know when they experience conditions which are defined in the U.S. context as problems (e.g. discrimination, being cheated out of wages, etc.) For a detailed discussion of legal system problems see Ed Kissam and Anna Garcia "Community Assessment of Migrants' Service Needs" Report to Florida Rural Legal Services, Aguirre International, May, 1986.

Educational Attainment and Basic Skills Development Needs -- Summary

The educational profile of California's LEP adults suggests that traditional distinctions between "illiterate" and "literate" service populations have little utility for describing the foundation skills of the overwhelming majority of California's LEP population in need of adult education services. Most fall into a "very limited literate" range.

In terms of basic skills remediation, the key recognition is that educational needs include not only more literacy but different kinds of literacy. Kissam has argued elsewhere (Kissam, 1994; Kissam and Intili, 1994) that the evidence from post-NAFTA labor market demand and Mexican curriculum suggests that targeted literacy development should be a high priority for serving the Mexican immigrant population, with a primary emphasis on the development of document literacy and quantitative literacy competencies as a foundation for building SCANS-linked skills.[18] The extent to which Asian LEP adults are likely to come from rural backgrounds or language groups with non-Roman alphabets suggests that their needs (particularly those of groups such as the Hmong) may require even greater attention to basic literacy.

At the same time, the responses to the SSHS indicate the priority given by Spanish-speaking LEP adults to adult education targeted to the domains of workplace skills development and community participation. However, the picture is actually more complex because living in immigrant enclaves serves to buffer LEP adults from functioning in a social environment where English predominates and where solid basic skills and English-language facility are needed in a broad range of problem-solving contexts, including family life and lifelong learning. LEP adults' schooling prepares them to function relatively well in the communities where they live but it provides them only a shaky foundation for personal achievement and occupational mobility. Moreover, new research (Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 1995) suggests that when it comes to functioning at the intersection of family life and lifelong learning, i.e., in the specialized but crucial issue of fostering and sustaining their children's school success, Latino immigrants begin to experience serious difficulties.[19]

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[18] See Edward Kissam and Jo Ann Intili, "From *Compadrazgo* to Total Quality Management", Paper presented to the 2nd International Conference on Quality Management in Education, February, 1994 and Ed Kissam, "A New Paradigm for Mexican Adults' Learning", MicroMethods, October, 1993.

LEP Adults' English-Language Ability and Learning Needs --Overview of Selected Research

There is a large literature in several different disciplines (and in many cases multi-disciplinary areas) which relates to LEP adults' English-language ability and the broad issue as to how the adult education system might best respond to their needs. In this section, we highlight: a) data sources bearing directly on the English-language ability of California LEP adults, and b) key points on the process and context of English-language acquisition from the literature in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Data Sources for Profiling English-Language Competencies of California LEP Adults

There is a good deal of data on the English-language ability of immigrants and refugees in general and California in particular. The national survey of IRCA-Legalized Immigrants conducted by Westat, Inc. for the U.S. Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services provides a rich data source of the characteristics of this particular cohort of immigrants (i.e., those legalized under IRCA) which makes up the largest single component of California immigrants

Other special-purpose surveys such as the National Agricultural Worker Survey (NAWS) have generated high-quality data on language skills and educational attainment of farmworkers in California (Mines, Boccalandro, and Gabbard, 1993). Research conducted for the Commission on Agricultural Workers include two case studies of California farmworker labor markets (Mason and Alvarado, 1993; Runsten et al, 1993). Valuable data on the adult LEP population attending adult schools in California can be found in its survey of IRCA-legalized students attending ESL/civics classes (CASAS, 1989; CDE, 1992, 1993), and in annual surveys of programs funded under Section 321 of the Adult Education Act (CASAS, 1996). Finally, the SALS (ETS, 1994) includes valuable cross-tabulations for persons whose first language was not English.

One of the limitations of these data sources is that none provide an in-depth multi-dimensional look at English-language ability in a full range of communication contexts.

[9] The Suarez-Orozcos have assembled a wealth of data on the transition from Mexico to the U.S. which is not easily summarized but at least one important set of dynamic interactions relates to conflicts between

Another limitation is that none permit adequate disaggregation: in identifying the study population they aggregate several somewhat distinct sub-populations (e.g. in the CASAS surveys) or immigrant cohorts (in the farm labor market case studies). Given these limitations, these data sources provide a solid basis for determining the broad outlines of need. However, a crucial consideration to be kept in mind in interpreting these data is the heterogeneity of the LEP population in terms of ethnicity, time in the U.S., childhood schooling, subsequent participation in adult education programs, exposure to English, personal aspirations, learning objectives, and experience in second-language learning.

Taken together, these data show: a) a wide gap between current English-language competencies and "mainstream" English, b) serious English-language literacy limitations and, at least, moderately compromised native-language literacy, and c) relatively slow rates of improvement in English-language competency both in adult education settings and in general.

Key Points on the Social Context of Second-Language Acquisition

There are not many studies which look specifically and in-depth at the real-world process of developing English-language proficiency among California LEP adults but some of the general research and analysis in this area is excellent. Particularly useful overviews include (Spener, 1994; McKay and Hornberger, 1996; Robert M. Smith and Associates, 1990). Here we give particular attention to the general theoretical background which has developed which relates to second-language acquisition and to the work of several researchers who have focused on ethnic communities of importance in California.[20]

A fundamental point from the demographic and sociological literature is that English-language acquisition is a social process. Age at arrival in the U.S. and length of residence are primary factors determining English-language acquisition, modulated by gender and ethnicity (Veltman, 1988a; Veltman, 1989; Veltman, 1990).. There may however be differences in the rate at which different ethnic groups acquire English: according to a study by Gillian Stevens summarized in (Fix, 1994) immigrants from

orientation toward the family and the society at large.

[20] Marcia Farr's work is with Mexicans in Chicago who retain strong ties to sending villages in Mexico. Gail Weinstein-Shr's work is with Cambodians in Massachusetts, and with Latinos, and Chinese in

Spanish-speaking countries become proficient in English at a greater rate than those from other non-English speaking countries.

We see differences in rates for developing English-language proficiency as being consistent with the basic analysis linking English-language acquisition to social context. Each particular group of LEP adults is likely to have a distinct profile of experience with English, including differences in amount of English-language instruction in their country of origin, for some refugees, intensive interactions in English with sponsors or other human service agencies, community service institutions such as hospitals and schools with varying degrees of bilingual staff, varying degrees of linguistic isolation in the neighborhood in which they live, and different uses of English in the workplace. Differences in rate of English-language acquisition are, presumably, the function of aggregate exposure to and use of English, as well as baseline competencies (e.g. education). A more complex and challenging issue for adult education is to understand the potential implications of these varying experiences of English for ESL and other basic skills instruction.

Given these considerations, the social intervention delivered by adult education program design should ideally be visualized as an effort to support, motivate, and accelerate English-language acquisition, i.e., "learning English" rather than as a single isolated effort, i.e., "teaching a person how to speak English.[21]

Because human social interactions are complex, language acquisition is complex. Running through the entire literature in sociolinguistics is attention to the fact that second-language use and learning is both context-sensitive and multi-dimensional. Building on the work of Fishman (Fishman and Ma, 1962) researchers such as Hymes have stressed the idea of "communicative competence" as entailing dimensions of social meaning which go well beyond syntactic, semantic, and phonemic competencies. The idea of language use as a set of skills acquired and deployed within a social context is a powerful one and has been extended in many ways which both reflect on LEP adult learners' needs. This perspective, at the same time, holds great promise for instructional practice. Gumperz, for example,

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Philadelphia. In his work, Steve Reder has examined literacy in three communities: Hmong, Mexican migrants in the Northwest, and an Eskimo village.

[21] Many ESL instructors argue that, in practice, they "teach across the curriculum", dealing with a very broad spectrum of skills development tasks in their interactions with LEP adult learners while, at the same time, individualizing instruction to the nature of the specific group of enrollees. This is not, however, necessarily either the official or the usual content of ESL classes.

points to the process of "conversational inferencing" as a factor both in cross-cultural communication and in interpreting spoken language. Presumably, targeted attention to development of such meta-skills might play a crucial role in facilitating continued use of English outside the "sheltered" context of the ESL classroom.

Since learning is contextual, development of English-language does not proceed independently in distinct domains of oral and print competency but, instead, in partially overlapping domains which interact to facilitate skills-building (Farr, 1994). Although Farr's work has been conducted in Chicago, it is particularly valuable in the California context as she describes some of the interactions between literacy and oral language in a Mexican-American community where learning English is part of a bridge between past life in a home country, current life, and future life in the United States.

Reder has expanded the general idea of language acquisition within a social context to explore how the literacy history of a specific community may affect language use and interactions between oral language and literacy. Within Reder's practice-engagement theory framework, different individuals may have different modes of engagement with language use (i.e., technological, functional, and social engagement) and, in fact, may collaborate by combining each individual's competencies to communicate effectively, e.g. to write a letter to a newspaper editor. Reder's work has particular relevance, both because it describes actual patterns of linguistic collaboration in immigrant communities and because it provides a basis for formulating effective strategies for collaborative ESL instruction. Reder and Green use the metaphor of "giving literacy away" to describe an instructional approach which, as they put it, "is meant to suggest the delivery of literacy training to adults in the context of their own settings, peer networks and value systems rather than in those of the service provider" (Reder and Green, 1985).

Gail Weinstein-Shr highlights an extremely important dimension of the English-language acquisition process by emphasizing the implications of inter-generational language shift (Weinstein-Shr, 1994). By focusing on language-use within the family context, Weinstein-Shr explores the different dimensions of intra-family language use; she emphasizes, in particular, LEP adults' expressed needs to communicate with their children and their grandchildren while retaining power/authority within the family structure.

The most immediately important practical implications of recent research for understanding the adult learning needs of California's LEP adults is that "learning English" is a metaphor for a huge spectrum of personal and linguistic transformations. Efforts to enhance LEP adults' language acquisition should, ideally, take into account the personal, family, and community context in which this process takes place. In principle, instructional effectiveness can be tremendously increased by program creativity in responding to the particular "needs profile" of each community and each sub-group of learners. In practice, even if the adult education system has no immediate way to fully understand the complex mix of personal resources, perspectives, and aspirations LEP learners bring to an ESL program, all programs must give careful attention for ways to extend learning beyond the classroom in recognition of the degree to which English-language acquisition involves conscious formal and unconscious informal collaboration in acquiring and enhancing language skills.

English-Language Ability --Data from the Spanish-speaking Household Survey (SSHS)

In this section we present background data on SSHS respondents' English-language abilities and use of English. These data provide a basis for considering the extent and type of ESL and ABE services they need as a service population and the degree of individual variation from learner to learner. They also provide a basis for interpreting the findings of the current study in relation to research findings from other studies and in relation to macro-level data. The SSHS survey specifically included several alternative measures of English-language ability designed to facilitate this. These include a rating of English-language ability comparable to that used in the decennial census (and in the National Adult Literacy Survey). This provides a basis for linking the micro-level data presented here to the macro-level data presented in **Chapter 1** and assessing the degree to which the SSHS survey population is representative of the state's Spanish-speaking LEP population. The indices of English-language ability also include the questions used in the multi-agency federal study of the legalized immigrant population conducted by Westat, Inc. for HHS/DOL.[22]

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[22], Shirley Smith, Roger G. Kramer, and Audrey Singer, **Characteristics and Labor Market Behavior of the Legalized Population Five Years Following Legalization**. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, September, 1996.

The profile of SSHS respondents' English-language ability varies slightly in relation to the specific measure of English-language ability used as a basis for assessment. The variability of self-assessment clearly shows the difficulty of assessing language proficiency -- either in the context of ESL placement or in the context of assessing program outcomes. As in the case of other literacy competencies, each individual's profile is somewhat jagged -- a unique "fingerprint" of information-handling and communication of each.

Because social environment plays such a major role in shaping adult learners' instructional needs, we made it a priority in the SSHS to explore this issue. In addition to basic indicators of English-language ability, the SSHS includes a thorough survey of respondents' assessment of their overall ability to function in different domains of their lives -- both in the current context in which they live and, hypothetically, if they were required to function in an English-language environment. These provide a measure of the extent to which Spanish-speaking LEPs' ability to address the issues in their lives is context-sensitive and the extent to which their perceived English-language learning needs are a function of their immediate social environment.

Table 2-3A below reports SSHS respondents' self-assessed English-language ability in general, using the same categories used in the Census Bureau reporting of English-language ability which are the basis for the analyses in Chapter 1. **Table 2-3B** below provides a comparable, but slightly different measure of self-assessed English-language ability in specific communication contexts. This measure of English-language ability is the same one used by Westat for the DOL/HHS/INS survey of the legalized population, thereby permitting comparison to the findings of that study.

Table 2-3A
Self-Assessment of English-Language Ability:
Overall

In General	Well or Very Well	Not well	Not at all
Speak English	5%	53%	42%
Read English	9%	38%	53%
Write English	5%	24%	71%

Table 2-3B
Self-Assessment of English-Language Ability:

Specific Tasks-Oral English				
How well could perform task	**Easily or with only slight difficulty**	**With some difficulty**	**With great difficulty**	**Could not do at all**
Speak with a store clerk	7%	22%	34%	37%
Speak with a doctor, nurse, or teacher	5%	19%	36%	40%
Speak on the telephone	7%	13%	35%	45%
Specific Tasks-Written English				
Read a newspaper	5%	18%	25%	52%
Read a magazine	6%	18%	24%	52%
Read instructions or recipes	10%	18%	27%	45%

Tables 2-3A and **2-3B** show that SSHS respondents' self-assessed proficiency in speaking and reading English agree well with measures anchored in relation to specific, but fairly broadly defined, oral tasks or literacy competencies. It is useful to note that, in oral-aural English, telephone conversations are somewhat more demanding because speech is removed from its physical context. Similarly, the demands of using English in a health-care environment are somewhat more challenging than "street English" as benchmarked to talking with a store clerk. The SSHS survey sample is slightly less proficient than Westat's multi-ethnic legalized immigrant sample was in 1992; this is as expected since the LPR survey sample had all resided in the U.S. for at least 10 years.[23]

These global assessments of English-language proficiency highlight the existence of two distinct sub-populations -- one which might more accurately be described as "seriously constrained" in English-language ability which may usefully be distinguished from the population which speaks virtually no English. The learning needs of one (the limited English speakers) relate to extending and improving their ability in English, while the learning needs of the other (the non-English speakers) relate to learning an entirely new language. In this context, the traditional distinction between "beginning", "intermediate" and "advanced" ESL students is, at once, useful and misleading. It is useful in that it

[23] The LPR sample included immigrants from a number of English-speaking countries in the Caribbean, Europe, Africa, Asia, and North America (Canada).

suggests, judiciously, an allocation of resources among learners of different levels of English proficiency.

At the same time, the tacit and inadvertent metaphor of visualizing the longitudinal process of learning English as one which occurs primarily within the classroom context is misleading because all of the potential ESL service population have some experience in learning English. In a real sense, ESL adult education students residing in the U.S. are all already "lifelong" learners who have begun, to some degree, the process of English-language acquisition, suggesting the desirability of further consideration of adult education providers' role in accelerating and fostering increased English-language proficiency, i.e., "learning English" as distinct from the role of "teaching" English. Clearly, newly-arrived immigrants or refugees are, in a straightforward sense, "beginning" learners but their experience (and instructional needs) must be distinguished from those of an older immigrant who may have lived in California for one or two decades without learning much English.

As other researchers have stressed, most resident LEP adults already have some level of "survival" communication skills; the issue is, perhaps, not so much survival as success -- prevailing in a difficult environment. Here too, an emphasis on facilitating an ongoing natural process of cultural and cognitive broadening of horizons is what comes to mind. From this perspective, then, a key objective might be, for example, to shift the mode of "collaborative communication", from reliance on paid scribes or *notarios* for letter-writing and information on how "the system" works to using classroom time for sharing of information among peers (while punctuating the similarities between this process and formal and professional events such as conferences and seminars).

Skills Development Needs in Four Major Functional Domains

Successful functioning in contemporary society demands of virtually all individuals, limited English or not, a broad repertoire of "high-performance" skills in communication, teamwork and collaboration, acquisition, interpretation, and evaluation of novel information, and problem-solving. Over the past decade, a solid analytic framework for describing and responding to these skills development needs has emerged. This framework is based on the work of Anthony Carnevale regarding employment-related skills

and subsequently on a federal inter-agency initiative, the Secretary's Commission for Achieving the Necessary Skills (SCANS) which formulated a simple but powerful schematism for displaying the relationship among these distinct but interrelated competencies.

In the context of California adult education policy, this thrust has given rise to a new conceptual paradigm to guide adult education policy and practice, a commitment to develop adult learners' competencies in four major domains of adult functioning -- workplace, family life, community life, and life-long learning. Each of these domains is interrelated but, in general, the domain of lifelong learning competencies (in the SCANS framework "learning to learn") can be seen as a foundation for building intellectual agility in responding to the demanding and constantly-changing challenges of workplace, family, and community life.

The key recognition is that a "world-class" adult education system must, within the concrete social environment in which learners now function, seek to develop, a solid foundation of skills which, eventually, can be deployed or "transferred" into a broader range of functional contexts. While the SCANS framework was developed in an environment of policy concerns about skills deficits affecting workers' ability to function in the "high-performance" workplace, there are important ways in which contemporary family life, community life, and lifelong learning challenges demand the same competencies that employers told researchers they wanted in the workforce. For example, teamwork and negotiating skills developed in one context --e.g. dealing with family and friends --can (and must) be transferred into relations with co-workers at a team-based business establishment and with political allies in addressing common community concerns.

In order to provide guidance on Spanish-speaking adults' skills development needs in each of these major domains, we asked SSHS respondents to rate their ability to deal with characteristic demands in each. In order to assess needs in these distinct domains we constructed an index of self-assessed ability to function in each skills domain. The index for each domain, i.e., workplace, family life, community, lifelong learning, consisted of four sub-areas (a total of 16 distinct areas of functioning) of SCANS-linked competencies. We asked SSHS survey respondents to rate how confident they were that they could successfully cope with the demands they faced in each of these domains -- in the context in which they were currently working and living and, hypothetically, if they needed to

function in English (as they would, say, in any Midwestern state or, in fact, in many communities or workplace settings in California).

Table Series 2-4A through **2-4D** show that Spanish-speaking LEP adults are relatively functional in their current context but that they would be would be severely constrained if they had to function in an English-speaking context to which they were not adapted. This finding serves, in a broad way, to underscore the fact that the perceived benefits accruing to LEP adults from English-language, literacy, and other basic skills development relate not to the ability to survive in their current environment in the immediate future but, instead, to the possibility of achieving the same measure of social and economic mobility available to English-proficient persons ---in any environment, in response to any contingency. Within the social ecology of immigrant enclaves, many of the Spanish-speaking LEP adults we talked to were able to function relatively well (although current competencies varied significantly among sub-groups as we discuss in **Chapter 4**) but as they moved out of the protected "core" of their social universe, they felt less and less confident of success.[24]

From this perspective, then, a major theme to be addressed in responding to LEP adults' needs is skills development oriented specifically toward building a foundation for the personal, social, and economic agility and mobility, needed to "push the envelope" in contemporary America -- to do what one wants, live where one wants, and have the opinions one wants to have.

Table Series 2-4A through **2-4D** below, then shows current competencies, self-assessed competencies for functioning in a "standard" (i.e., English-speaking environment). The mean difference computed for functioning in the current context and the English-speaking context, then provides a measure of: a) relative need for skills development in each of the 16 areas and b) expected benefits from targeted skills development in each domain.

[24] In sociolinguistic terms, movement out of a core universe of social interactions can be associated with ability to use a variety of socially distinct dialects, i.e., code-switching. Versatility and flexibility in communication are, of course, closely but not perfectly linked to competencies in broader areas such as teamwork which rest on communications.

Workplace Domain

The question of workplace competencies is particularly crucial because a leading public policy concern relates to whether immigrants are (and will continue to be) economically self-sufficient.[25] The extensive research on immigrants' labor market experience shows that they have extremely high labor force participation and low reliance on public services. However, many researchers are concerned because immigrants' earning power increases less rapidly with age than native-born English-proficient workers. Moreover, current cohorts of immigrants may not experience the modest earning gains of previous immigrant cohorts because skills demands for entry into and career advancement in the "primary" labor market continue to escalate.

The employment patterns of SSHS respondents were broadly representative of the limited English-proficient Latino immigrant population with limited schooling in that virtually all were clustered in low-wage occupations in immigrant-dominated industries. Among those employed, leading occupations were packing shed/cannery work (18%), farmwork (12%), restaurant work (13%), housecleaning (10%), construction and carpentry (8%), unskilled factory work (7%), child care (5%), auto repair and auto body (5%), gardening (4%) and child care/babysitting (4%). Within the context of this secondary labor market, the remaining "premium" jobs held by SSHS respondents are those commonly thought of as semi-skilled blue-collar work -- warehouse work, butcher, florist, machinist, janitor, cashier, and hotel employee. The respondent whose employment required the highest level of skills was a nurse.

More than one-third of the SSHS were not working at the time of our interview. Of these non-working respondents, 28% were unemployed but apparently in the labor force, 7% said they were housewives, and 1% were not working because of age or disability. It is not possible to tell exactly which proportion of these were discouraged workers, temporarily unemployed workers, and casual workers. The boundaries among these standard labor force distinctions are quite fuzzy in this population because employment is

[25] Refugees' labor market participation is lower than that of other groups of immigrants, making employability even more of a public concern but this should not be taken as evidence that investments in building workplace competencies are not worthwhile, rather that programs should be structured to respond to each service population's needs. Hmong and Cambodian participants in our focus groups provided valuable insight into the labor market problems they faced.

typically so unstable and employment is so often contingent on personal networks rather than effort in "looking for work" via standard channels such as reading the want ads.

Table 2-4A below shows SSHS respondents' own assessment of their abilities (and conversely skills development needs) in this domain.

Table 2-4A
Self-Assessment of Workplace Competencies

Workplace Domain: *How confident are you that you can do what it takes to meet your own and others' expectations*	**In current environment**			**In English-only environment**		
	Very or extremely	**Somewhat**	**Not very not at all**	**Very or extremely**	**Somewhat**	**Not very not at all**
a) in the work you're doing now?*	66%	22%	12%	8%	15%	77%
b) for getting a better position in the kind of work you're doing now?	40%	15%	45%	5%	9%	86%
c) for getting a job in some new kind of work (occupation)?	43%	17%	40%	7%	11%	82%
d) for communicating with your supervisor, boss, or the company owner	47%	21%	32%	7%	11%	82%

**Q. A-5a was coded "not applicable" for persons not currently in the labor force, i.e., neither employed or looking for work. 69% of those who answered this question (174) were, in fact, in the labor force.*

Table 2-4A shows that SSHS respondents who do work feel relatively well-prepared to do their current jobs but much less prepared for career mobility, either upward mobility within the occupation they are now in or horizontal movement to deal with changing employment. Interestingly, many report themselves quite able to communicate with their supervisors. This is because the workplace language in many of the industries and occupations where respondents work is Spanish (e.g. packing sheds, auto mechanic shops, restaurants). In cases such as housework where the workplace language was English, some respondents who were very limited in English felt they could communicate adequately with the person they worked for (the lady of the house) specifically because the communication demands were minimal -- e.g., "Clean here!" Only a very small minority (5-8%) felt they could function outside this distinctive workplace environment.

Table 2-4A highlights the degree to which LEP adults are "at risk" workers, constantly threatened by the possibility that the establishment where they work will go broke, leave town, or force workers to leave work as a result of on-the-job conflicts, poor working conditions, or job demands which can only be met by workers with excellent health. In terms of workplace competencies, then, LEP adults' needs cluster around the need to build the foundation of SCANS-linked skills which will provide them the same occupational mobility and freedom to negotiate with employers enjoyed by English-proficient workers.

Family Life Domain

LEP adults' family lives are, typically, poised at a place in social space between the "sheltered" domain of informal family and village networks which govern many interactions and the external formal institutions such as schools, health care providers, and social service agencies which, also, play an important role in their lives and, perhaps more importantly, their children's future well being. **Table 2-4B** reports SSHS respondents' assessment of their ability to function in this broad area of social interaction.

Table 2-4B
Self-Assessment of ability
to deal with demands of Family Life

Family Life Domain: *How confident are you that you can do what it takes to meet your own and others' expectations*	**In current environment**			**In English-only environment**		
	Very or extremely	**Somewhat**	**Not very not at all**	**Very or extremely**	**Somewhat**	**Not very not at all**
a) in dealing with money management issues	49%	24%	27%	7%	8%	85%
b) in getting help to deal with health, housing, or similar issues?	35%	26%	39%	6%	6%	88%
c) for advising family members in the decisions they face	58%	19%	23%	5%	8%	87%
d) for communicating with the people you talk to in daily life--stores, teachers, neighbors	55%	22%	23%	7%	9%	84%

Table 2-4B shows that, in their current environment, SSHS respondents feel relatively well prepared to engage in the routine social demands of their family lives and day-to-day transactions but much less prepared to deal with outside institutions, including those meant to help them with the problems they face. As we discuss in **Chapter 4**, there are, however significant differences among sub-groups in terms of their assessment of their ability to function effectively in the domain of family life.

It deserves special note, perhaps, that the issue of advising family members in the decisions they face in an English-speaking context is not hypothetical but one commonly faced in connection with parenting since most U.S.-born children of LEP parents grow up to be English-dominant while theirparents retain their native language. **Table 2-4B** shows that few feel well-qualified to function effectively in this domain. Taken in the context of the research on the problems faced by immigrant children (and their parents) in juggling two languages and value systems which, at times, conflict the issue of building "high-performance" skills in the domain of family life may merit special attention, particularly in light of the constrains SSHS respondents describe in communicating with "outside" institutions in English.

In general while SSHS respondents feel as minimally qualified to deal with family life as with workplace issues in English, they do feel somewhat more qualified to cope with these issues in their current (Spanish-speaking) social environment.

Community Life Domain

The often rhetorical issue of civic involvement is for Californians living in communities which are often divided by race, ethnicity, language, and economic class, a practical real-life concern. Ideally, community involvement will include not only activities related to pursuing one's own personal goals and objectives but, also, efforts to make a contribution to community well-being. "Productive" involvement in community life involves a wide-range of skills in acquiring and evaluating information, problem-solving, negotiating and teamwork, particularly for low-income persons who cannot afford to isolate themselves from overall issues of community life.

Table 2-4C below shows that the community life domain is a particularly problematic one for SSHS respondents as they do not feel particularly well qualified to deal with the community life demands they face in either Spanish or English.

Table 2-4C
Self-Assessment of Ability
to Participate in Community Life

Community Life Domain: *To what extent do you feel you're able to deal with or contribute to community responses to the following issues you face :*	**In current environment**			**In English-only environment**		
	Great extent	**Some extent**	**Not very well not at all**	**Great extent**	**Some extent**	**Not very well not at all**
a) dealing with ongoing community problems -- e.g. help from police to decrease crime, better housing	42%	28%	30%	2%	10%	88%
b) joining with friends and neighbors to have a say about how organizations respond to your needs	34%	20%	46%	2%	7%	91%
c) for understanding the community issues you hear about, see in the newspaper or which people vote on?	25%	27%	48%	3%	4%	93%
d) for communicating your opinion or viewpoint to local leaders, your state representatives or Congressional representatives	26%	18%	55%	3%	5%	92%

Table 2-4C shows that SSHS respondents feel they are less able to cope with the tasks of understanding the community issues they hear about in newspapers or which people vote on and their ability to communicate their opinion to their local leaders and elected representatives than with any of the other 16 tasks inventoried in our analysis of competencies in different domains.

The effective functioning of the democratic process under such conditions is only barely conceivable. While current policy priorities place little value on the existence of a broadly-based process of democratic involvement, this is a concern which cannot safely be ignored.[26] While it might be argued that many LEP adults will never leave their communities and others may never leave their jobs, the idea that all should be regularly involved in the public decisions which will affect their lives and those of their children. The community life domain is a priority area for skills development.

The Domain of Lifelong Learning

Having a solid foundation for continued learning and personal skills development is a necessary condition for achieving social and economic equity in an information-based society. This is a domain where adult basic skills programs have a particular contribution to make. Even if there are not adequate financial or organizational resources to prepare LEP adult learners to bridge the very substantial skills gap they face, the prospect of establishing a foundation for learning is an important part of the adult education mission. In very practical terms, the metaphor of "learning English", while relating to many dimensions of acculturation, relates most directly to establishing a foothold for continued learning about U.S. society. Here, as in the other domains, SSHS respondents feel somewhat prepared to function in their current environment but only minimally prepared to function in a English-language environment. Thus, **Table 2-4D** below serves, in part to emphasize the fairly obvious set of needs related to learning English.

The most striking pattern observable in SSHS respondents' answers to this set of questions is the recognition that building skills in the area of computer-based and library-based access to information (a subset of reference skills in general) is an important area for development. Certainly, by way of commitment to the principle of ongoing learning, efforts to build LEP adult learners' ability to acquire and analyze the information they need to navigate an information-based economy and society would seem to deserve very high priority. LEP adults' own sense of their skills development needs in this area is congruent with that of "third party" stakeholders such as employers and programs such as health

[26] Surely, native-born English-proficient adults with compromised literacy skills might report similar difficulties, though possibly slightly less severe. The effective disenfranchisment of all such socially marginalized groups is of immediate and practical, as well as theoretical, concern.

education, consumer education and other special-purpose agencies which regularly seek ways to improve their ability to communicate to "hard to reach" groups.

Table 2-4D
Self-Assessment of Ability
To Develop New Skills, Learn New Information

Lifelong Learning Domain: *How confident are you that you can do what it takes to develop new skills or get the information you need to get ahead in life, how about?*	**In current environment**			**In English-only environment**		
	Very or extremely	Somewhat	Not very not at all	Very or extremely	Somewhat	Not very not at all
a) participating and succeeding in a program to learn a new trade or occupation?	51%	18%	31%	7%	9%	84%
b) using magazines, manuals, or books to find out information you want or need (at work or in your daily life)	45%	18%	37%	5%	11%	84%
c) using other resources to get the information you need, for example, computers or libraries	24%	13%	63%	4%	7%	89%
d) deciding whether or not you want to improve your educational skills and how you might best go about doing that	44%	20%	36%	5%	9%	86%

As is the case in the other domains, there are, within the overall population of LEP adults, sub-groups which differ distinctly from each other in terms of self-assessed competencies and, presumably, foundation skills needed to successfully engage in lifelong learning. We discuss these relationships in more depth in **Chapter 4**; here it should be noted, though, that the functional domain where prior schooling has the greatest impact is in preparedness for lifelong learning.

LEP Focus Group Perspectives On Learning Needs

We explored the perspectives of both out-of-school current adult school students about their learning needs in focus groups with Hmong in Fresno, Cambodians in Long Beach, and Latinos in Long Beach, Redwood City, and Sanger. These focus groups included discussion themes related to LEP adults' learning objectives, needs in terms of access to adult education services, and benefits from adult education.

All groups saw learning English as being very important. As one Hmong discussant put it, "The future is important, but if we cannot learn and cannot speak, how can we get there?". However different groups had different levels of apprehensiveness about their ability to succeed as adult learners in general and as English-language learners in particular. All saw children as being better learners than adults, but preoccupation with success related also to prospective adult school experience One Hmong discussant expressed his anxieties this way,

"We never had any formal education. If we go to school we will learn too slowly. If we attend the same class with others, they will all pass while we will remain behind. This will be discouraging for us...Now matter how we learn, we cannot speak and understand. If we had learned to read and write at the same time as we did in Laos we might be able to learn. In this country when we go to school with the Americans, what discourages us is that when we just start to write something, they have already finished 2-3 pages"

The most commonly articulated needs related to English as a way to access better employment, English in communicating in the course of everyday community and family life. A very common preoccupation in all the focus groups was, also, the need to learn English in order to participate in vocational skills training programs: English for employment was also important for the Cambodian and Hmong discussants but there was more a focus on English as part of day to day family life. One Hmong discussant put it this way, "Learning English can open many doors in this world."

The focus groups went beyond the survey data in surfacing the issue of "learning English" as a metaphor for the challenging and many faceted process of being integrated into California society. For both immigrant and native-born limited English-proficient adults, communication is recognized as the foundation for effective (and more equitable) social interaction. Both in Sanger and in Redwood City, several focus group participants spoke movingly of the need to learn English to "become involved", to overcome isolation.

In Long Beach, a Cambodian woman said that one of the main benefits of going to the adult school and learning English was that she was no longer shy and afraid to talk to strangers. At the same time there was a strong feeling that it was appropriate for the general public and society at large to expect immigrants to learn English. As one focus group participant put it, "We're here, we have to speak English!". Another said, "English is the language of the land."

However, the Latino focus group participants, while believing the appropriateness of social expectations about learning English as a central element in acculturation both practically and symbolically, also felt a high level of pressure to learn English to "defend themselves", protect their rights in a society which is capricious in its attitudes toward them (e.g. "Some Americans like us, others don't"). In describing the community environment in which they lived, Redwood City focus group participants said, for example, "We're always on the defensive", "We need to learn to be equal", "We don't know how to get along [with others]." In Long Beach, a Latina commented, "If you don't speak English, you can't fully understand your rights." Latinos also saw English as necessary to protect one's rights as an employee. One factory worker in Long Beach said, "I have worked in a factory for four years and I've seen how they discriminate against employees who don't understand English." Hmong discussants expressed some of the same concerns; one listed as something going to adult school could bring about, "...others would not look down on us."

Another focus group participant drew an interesting link between communication and discrimination, arguing he needed to learn English, in part, to overcome the social perception that all Latinos are the same. The need to "defend oneself" was seen not simply as sociopolitical issue but, also, as a personal one. One woman in Sanger, for example, talked about the problem of "knowing if people are saying bad things about you." Another older woman (a U.S. citizen born in Texas but raised in Mexico) very specifically decided to study English because she had been bullied by an English-speaking woman after a car accident and felt she had been treated unfairly by the police as a result of not being fluent in English.

Latino focus group participants thought of the issue of acquiring citizenship (and instruction to learn citizenship information) in similar ways to learning English. Most agreed that becoming a citizen was appropriate if one was to live their life in the United

States (which not all were sure they would do). Several respondents referred to this as becoming a citizen out of "conviction", i.e., believing its the right thing to do. One respondent said "I live in this country, I'm now part of this country." Others focused on the practical aspects of citizenship -- retaining eligibility for benefits, ease in traveling back and forth to Mexico, protecting one's children's rights.

In Sanger, a theme closely linked to life in the agricultural labor market arose, namely the need to learn English to get out of the control of social and economic intermediaries. For example, one farmworker wanted to be able to talk directly to the ranchers he worked for, not through the *mayordomo* (supervisor) who could talk to the rancher; he also wanted to know what transpired between the supervisor and his employer. Others complained about the cost and dangers of needing to rely on *notarios* ("notaries") to fill out forms which one then signs without knowing what they say.

There was consensus in all the groups that knowing English meant better jobs and better pay. One married woman, for example wanted to move up from housekeeping into a better job in a hospital or in business. A middle-aged farmworker wanted to learn English to move into restaurant work which he felt was less physically demanding and more stable than farmwork. Poverty was a constant anxiety for many and education was seen as the way out. One Hmong discussant focused eloquently on the stress of competing on unequal terms in the labor market. "A lot of people died because they lacked money and education. If we think about money too much our mind will explode and we will die so we try not to think about it."

For both Latino and Cambodian focus group participants, a constantly-recurring theme was the need to learn English to subsequently go into vocational training. Some discussants were quite specific while others were not. In Sanger, a grape cutter wanted to know English so he could go on to study landscaping and make more money in that occupation, building on his current skills. Several men wanted to learn English to learn carpentry, another wanted English to learn car mechanics. In Long Beach a young woman wanted to learn English to learn a trade such as computers or cosmetology. Some had somewhat higher aspirations, for example, becoming an interpreter or a teacher.

Cambodian and Latino focus group participants focused on English in the family life domain primarily in terms of helping their children in school, talking to their children's teachers, and communicating with English-speaking children.

Several of the Hmong had been sent to adult school as part of the requirements of GAIN. They had found this to be a very negative experience Their comments were that their ABE experience was very poorly integrated with their genuine interest in becoming employed or communicating better with their children. They said that adult school did not teach them enough so they could have better opportunities to participate in anything. They noted also, that in the course of carefully monitoring their educational participation, one function of GAIN caseworkers was to keep them from going on to higher education or to stay in class long enough to learn anything.

A final observation is that in each of the focus groups we found participants to be quite seriously engaged in thinking about the meaning of the personal and social migration they were involved in and what adult education meant to them. While few lived in a very "literate" environment, we were pleased to see the degree of reflection and thoughtfulness that participants brought to our discussions. In the course of a closing exercise in which focus group participants were asked to summarize their feelings about the focus group, we discovered that the overwhelming majority were delighted and excited by the opportunity to actually have a "discussion", to talk over as a group issues central to their lives. This suggests to us the value of increased attention in the course of the regular curriculum to the kind of intensive analysis, information-exchange, and discussion which took place in the focus groups. Both in-school and out-of-school focus group participants seemed very eager for a forum in which they could go over these issues.

Throughout the discussions in all the focus groups was the sense that "learning English" is, for the LEP adults we talked with, much more than skills acquisition or communication skills development. For them, learning English was quite genuinely part of fulfilling their potential, as workers, family members, and as part of a community. The strong feelings associated with lack of English as a social barrier, isolating them from being seen as an individual, being treated equitably, protecting their rights and those of their family, and fulfilling their full potential need to be recognized, was an important part of the their aspirations for adult education. Access to learning (and success in adult learning), beyond building an individual's human and social capital, has community mental health

dimensions providing an essential ingredient in self-esteem, in personal aspirations and hopes for the future, and individual's sense that they can manage the many demands they face.

LEP Adults' Learning Needs in the Four Major Domains -- Summary

Across all four domains, LEP adults are dramatically less prepared to function in an English-language environment than in the social environment in which they currently live. Their adult learning needs may, indeed, be to acquire "survival skills" but, if so, it must be understood that what is at stake is their future -- not immediate survival but long term success. The role of adult learning in facilitating LEP adults' survival and success must be reconsidered and re-defined by adult education providers by taking into consideration the ways in which skills-building in one domain may impact development in another, and the practical tactical issue faced by learners as to what to concentrate on at what point in time. The main differences between domains in terms of constraints is that self-assessed current competency is higher for dealing with some of the demands of family life and work life than for community life and lifelong learning which are recognized to inevitably entail a degree of interaction with mainstream institutions, information sources, and English-proficient persons.

The findings presented here provide a foundation for the analysis in **Chapter 4** where we analyze differences among sub-groups within the LEP population in need of adult education services in terms of self-assessed needs profile, adult education experience, and learning objectives.

LEP Adults' learning priorities -- ESL and Skills Training

We asked SSHS respondents to give us an idea of the new kinds of things they'd like to learn or the kind of skills they might like to develop at some point in time and, also, how important that learning might be to them. Almost all (92%) of the respondents listed some area of interest. "Learning English" was clearly the top priority. Somewhat less than half (42%) listed this as their first choice, followed by "computers", listed by 14% of the respondents. The remaining interests fell into three broad areas -- vocational skills development (39%), professional/skills development (7%), and personal interests such as art and music (1%).

The specific vocational skills development areas (other than "computers") listed show a substantial degree of gender-stereotyping. For example, vocational skills objectives mentioned by women included cosmetology (6%), nursing (3%), cooking (3%), and fashion (2%); by men, auto repair (6%). Very few listed specific vocational skills objectives -- e.g. air conditioning specialist, dental assistant, plumbing apprenticeship. However, some (perhaps one-third of those listing a vocational skills objective) seemed to entail a clear plan for occupational advancement -- e.g. a restaurant worker wanting to study to be a chef, a hotel worker wanting to develop their skills to get ahead in the industry. Among the 7% who listed some sort of professional/technical training, the leading learning objective was small business skills development (mentioned by 10 respondents). Other professional/technical skills demands mentioned included: accountant, bilingual teacher, law enforcement, architect, and aviation. Only two respondents mentioned citizenship instruction as a learning objective; another mentioned pursuing a GED.

If we consider learning English and computer literacy to be a proxy for adult basic skills development demand, slightly more than half of the respondents might be expected to seek service from an adult school, community college, or community- based organization providing ESL or ABE courses. The strong demand for business skills development would, also, be expected to generate demands at an intermediate course level for adult schools and community colleges. However, a strong theme throughout the interviews is that an important reason for learning English is that English is necessary to pursue additional skills development (in either vocational training or a professional career development path). Improved access to bilingual vocational training or accelerated "feeder" classes combining a VESL orientation with skills training would, therefore, have a significant impact on actual enrollment and profile of course demand.

Most striking in SSHS respondents' discussions of their adult learning objectives is the need for individualized career guidance and vocational counseling. Very few had had an opportunity to carefully consider their current abilities, marketable skills, and interests; most had only a general idea of what kinds of adult learning strategies might afford them new career options or advancement in the industry or occupation in which they currently were working. Despite their ambition and seriousness, those who had considered such issues had no easy access to good advice on "technical" issues such as the length of time it might take them to accomplish different learning objectives, available scholarship or loan

support, necessary aptitudes and foundation skills, and economic rewards in one occupation or another. We take the interest in "learning computers" to represent a general recognition of the importance of information-related skills in the contemporary economy but we talked to no one who had a clear idea of career options in information management, software development, etc.

Continuing Education Plans

There is little evidence that participating in an adult learning program affected SSHS respondents' abstract plans to engage in some form of future learning; however, having been in an adult education program does appear to be related to concrete immediate plans to take the initiative to enroll. Slightly more of the SSHS respondents who had previously enrolled in an adult education class wanted to learn more and planned to continue their education within the next two or three years -- a rate about 30% higher than among those who had not been in an adult education class. Two-fifths (40%) of those who had been enrolled in an ESL class previously planned to enroll in another ESL class, while almost all of the rest planned to move into vocational training of some sort.

Perceived barriers to participating in an adult education program

In this section we discuss perceived barriers to participating in an adult education program in the context of determining what, if any, "special needs" LEP adults may have with respect to accessing adult education learning options. These are discussed further in Chapter 5 in connection with the analysis of the adult education system's responsiveness to LEP adults.

Data from the SSHS and from Focus Groups

We asked SSHS survey respondents to tell us about places they knew in their community where they could take classes. Almost three-quarters (73%) said that they knew about an adult school in their community. Another 11% knew about a local community college, and 4% knew of a vocational school or some other sort of learning program. Only 12% were unable to mention a place they knew where they could take classes. These responses would seem to indicate that outreach oriented toward informing LEP adults that there are adult schools has been quite successful.

On the other hand, in focus groups we learned that many LEP adults didn't know much about the local adult school; some, for example, didn't even know whether courses were free or not. The Cambodian and Latino focus groups out-of-school focus group discussants had heard about local adult schools and had positive images of them but the Hmong did not. Some didn't know about a local adult school, e.g. "There is one over there but we have never seen it ..we heard that it was over there by Freeway 99." Within the Hmong community in Fresno, the powerful dynamics of word-of-mouth which, in many communities, draw LEP learners to adult schools was reversed. A participant in the out-of-school Hmong focus group described a high level of negativism about adult schools among their friends and acquaintances:

"Our friends told us their teachers never changed their teaching curriculum. The students were learning the same thing over and over again. So the students felt dumb, got bored, dropped out of the school."

A current adult school participant also said that her initial image of the adult school was very negative.

"Before I attend school here and drove by, I thought it was a place where they put the dead. I was afraid."

However, another participant disagreed saying that one could tell it was a school by looking at the building. But this image, also, had some problematic overtones, as this also implied that the adult school was "for children."

The differences between the views of the Cambodians in Long Beach and Hmong in Fresno suggest that adult education programs can acquire a powerful social meaning of their own. Certainly the Hmong's negative perceptions of adult school-GAIN linkage stem, in part, from the idea of mandated attendance under threat of sanctions. But other factors, most importantly, curriculum and instructional methodology are also involved. We discuss these further in **Chapter 5** on the adequacy of system response to LEP adults.

We asked SSHS respondents (and focus group participants) how they thought adult learning programs should let people in the community know about classes. The most useful medium for outreach was judged to be mail (the one most commonly used now). This approach was recommended by 72% of respondents. Other recommended alternatives were, in descending order -- TV (53%), radio (40%), word-of-mouth (33%), via other

programs or community based organizations (29%). Focus group discussions, while not adding much information about specific media for outreach, strongly indicated the need to better communicate an idea of what adult education programs are really about.

In the SSHS we also asked about access to different types of classes, querying respondents about whether they thought that if they or a friend wanted to go to a class they could find one which would meet their needs. Almost all (88%) of the respondents who knew of an adult school or a community college where ESL classes might be offered said they thought people could easily find a class if they needed one. Similarly, 97 of the 100 who responded to our question about availability of citizenship classes also said that access was good but this means that less than half (45%) of the total number of persons who knew about some school had an idea whether or not it would be easy to get into a citizenship class. We interpret this to mean that, while many LEP adults know of adult schools as a place to learn English, they are not as often aware that the adult education system is now providing citizenship classes also. This further indicates the need for targeted outreach, oriented toward increasing awareness of the range of class offerings available through adult schools and community colleges.

Access to classes was generally considered good with about three-quarters (74%) of those who responded saying that ESL class schedules were all right, and even a higher proportion (82%) of those who were aware of citizenship classes saying that scheduling was fine. Similarly, there were complaints about class size from only 15% of those who rated access to ESL classes and 6% of those who rated access to citizenship classes. Our observation was that adult school siting arrangements were well-suited to facilitating LEP adults' access to classes and, in fact, the leading reason given for respondents as their reason for choosing a place to go for classes was proximity.

Almost all (92%) of the SSHS respondents who had identified a specific adult learning program they were interested in mentioned some sort of barrier to actually undertaking that course of learning. The leading barriers to participating in an adult school program, a vocational skills training program, and a community college course were comparable. The leading barrier was work (36%), followed by child care responsibilities (21%), knowing English (8%), and transportation/school location (4%), while the rest listed some other reason. Discussions in the focus groups show the same rank order of

problems but make it clear that work and child care responsibilities are intertwined (i.e., parents have child care problems because they are working).

Each of the barriers to adult learning has distinct implications for California's adult education system. The fact that physical access to schools was not problematic (at least in the case study communities) indicates that programs are well-situated.

The degree of problems related to accessing an adult education program varied among the LEP groups in our case studies, with Latinos reporting child care to be less serious a problem than either Cambodians or Hmong focus group participants. However, even among Latinos, the sub-groups for whom child care was a problem considered it a serious problem. This highlights the utility of efforts by adult schools to facilitate child care arrangements for parents who would like to attend classes. Sequoia Adult School, for example, arranged for parents to share child care on-site, while Long Beach adult school, for example, was experimenting with ESL/ABE instruction as part of a program for pre-school children and their mothers. In general, this provides a measure of the potential of family literacy programs designed to respond to the specific needs of LEP parents. It also serves, in part, to explain the fact that many women were very enthusiastic about the idea of "study circles" held at home, in commons areas of apartment buildings, or storefronts (see details in **Chapter 3**).

The fact that work is a leading barrier to learning serves to highlight the importance of alternative modalities for adult learning. A general problem is that much of this population not only is employed long hours in work which is physically demanding but, also, their work schedules are unstable. In Sanger, for example, most cannery/packing shed workers said that even if the adult school configured classes to their timetable, a problem they faced was a constantly-shifting work schedule. Few could afford to turn down an additional shift of work which might be scheduled at the height of the season. Even in Redwood City and Long Beach, construction workers, janitors, warehouse workers, maids, housecleaners, and cooks, are involved in a complex series of arrangements helping friends, picking up odd jobs, or changing from work at one place to another which interfere with pursuing a consistent course of adult learning.

Finally, English as a barrier to adult education program participation, suggests the importance of instructional designs which involve one version or another of concurrent

learning -- bilingual vocational training, VESL, a combination of self-directed English, tutoring, and skills training. Other possible responses might include accelerated VESL feeder classes for skills training and use of distance learning media for ESL. Computer-based learning systems located at the worksite also might have promise in combination with workplace ESL. This, of course, is an area where individual local programs can be designed to respond to the unique needs of each community. Unfortunately, the primary instructional mode for the adult education system continues to be within self-contained and relatively isolated skills development areas with little attention to teaching across the curriculum.

Phase-in and aggregate level of demand for adult education services

A crucial planning issue, if LEP adults' educational needs and plans are known with some degree of certainty is what service capacity will be needed to respond to these needs. The Spanish-speaking Household Survey (SSHS) provides unique data to estimate "market demand" for adult education services among Latinos -- the largest LEP population in California. Realistic "ballpark" estimates of demand for services are extremely useful in an environment where funding resources are clearly inadequate to respond to all needs. If, indeed, service capacity can be designed to accommodate only "likely demand" rather than responding to the full "universe of need" (i.e., the estimated population of 2.7 million LEP adults needing services as of January 1, 1997), then additional resources might be devoted to investments in service quality improvement.

Our analysis indicates that only a minority of LEP adults in need of adult education services are likely to actually seek these services in the immediate future. If barriers to participation in classroom-based adult education programs were mitigated and if the menu of alternative adult learning modalities were expanded, aggregate demand might dramatically increase but there would most probably remain substantial numbers of persons with skills development who would not actually seek services.

SSHS respondents were asked if there were any areas in which they would like to improve their skills or "new things" they'd like to learn and, if so, when they thought they might pursue these learning interests -- by enrolling in a class or pursuing ongoing learning in other fashion. Overall, 92% of the respondents said they would like to improve their

skills or learn something new, but only a minority had specific plans to actively pursue some course of continued learning. **Table 2-5** on the next page shows their responses:

Table 2-5
Respondents' Plans to Pursue Further Adult Learning

Plans to Pursue Adult Learning Goals	Long Beach (N=82)	Redwood City (N=95)	Sanger (N=85)	Overall (N=262)
"Next year" or in "next 2-3 years"	27%	23%	47%	33%
Doesn't know for sure	67%	74%	35%	56%
Never	6%	3%	18%	11%

We believe that the best single indicator of firm "market demand" for adult education services is the proportion of survey respondents expressing a definite intention to actually pursue their learning goals (i.e., "next year or in the next 2-3 years"). By this measure, even under ideal conditions, system capacity would only be needed to accomodate much less than one-third of the total stock of persons "needing" service. Estimation of ideal system capacity would require not so much attention to "universe of need" as to "throughput" (i.e. the length of time in the system it might take to respond adequately to an average learners' needs), inflows to the universe of need (i.e. school dropouts, new immigrants and refugees), a "new" demand resulting from changes in the menu of available services.[27]

Actual system capacity requirements might be lower; more detailed calculations of optimal system capacity require more careful examination of assumptions relating to: a) rate of throughput--amount of time needed to provide services to each LEP adult needing service, b) rate of influx into the "stock" of persons needing service -- i.e., school dropouts, immigrants, c) sensitivity of the service demand function -- i.e., the impact factors, such as welfare reform, which might change LEP adults' interest in seeking service.

While "slot utilization" (i.e., the pattern of use for one "seat" in a program) is a function of the rate of student dropout, length of enrollment (either repeating a course or

[27] Total system capacity requires a decision as to the rate at which it is desirable to decrease the "stock" or backlog of persons seeking service, as well as the number of new customers seeking service each year.

moving on to a more advanced level of instruction), the key point is that the system needs to be designed only to yield "just enough" capacity to accommodate need.

As noted in **Chapter 1**, there are tradeoffs between service capacity and service quality improvement, but a key strategic concern is the efficacy with which valuable time "in the system" is used to successfully build adult learners' skills. Inefficiency in the form of students who do not progress rapidly or who dropout and re-enroll creates bottlenecks in system throughput and decrease effective system capacity. While service quality improvement may actually increase demand for services, this is a positive outcome in terms of broad social policy; in terms of educational system capacity, it does, however, suggest the need to link expansion funding to service quality to reward those providers who, as a result of doing a superior job, experience increased demand for service.

While actual level of demand for any particular local community can be expected to vary substantially, aggregate demand is, at least, not likely to approach the "universe of need." The uncertainties associated with this indicator of demand relate to: a) generalizing from the community case study sample to the overall Spanish-speaking population, b) generalizing from the Spanish-speaking LEPs to the overall LEP service population, and c) reliability of the survey response about firm plans as an indicator.

The focus groups we did with non-Latino LEP adults, Hmong and Cambodians, while not amenable to statistical analysis, also suggest that only a minority of potential adult learners will actually enroll. As with the SSHS respondents, the majority of the out-of-school Cambodian LEP adults were undecided about attending school in the future. They mentioned a variety of reasons -- child care, lack of self-confidence, and worries about leaving their home (as it might be robbed in one's absence). Among the Hmong, work and child care constraints, coupled with negative impressions of the adult school system, would suggest relatively low demand for services, despite the value given to education by this group. However, the availability of well-designed multi-service integrated program designs would be likely to increase demand, particularly among refugee groups but, also, other immigrant populations.

The middle ground of persons who don't know if they will undertake some formal adult learning program include a sub-group of unknown size whose decision might be affected by one or several factors: a) successful efforts by the adult education system to

overcome the personal barriers which preclude their class enrollment, b) changes in their personal circumstances-- pre-school children going to school, loss of a job, family breakup, and c) new "marketing" efforts by adult education to present an expanded menu of adult learning modalities, or d) heightened awareness of the value and feasibility of adult learning.

Table 2-5 tabulations of responses by community highlight the fact that there are variations among the case study communities in proportion of Spanish-speaking LEPs planning to actively pursue adult learning goals. These affect levels of local demand. We discuss the ways in which community context affects LEPs' learning plans in more detail later.

In general, the variations among communities suggest that adult education service demand among Spanish-speaking LEPs seem to be related to degree of cultural/linguistic assimilation and labor market demand It is not surprising that Sanger (where intent to pursue adult learning seems strongest) is the community most dominated by bilingual and English-speaking Mexican-Americans. Redwood City (where intent to pursue adult education seems weakest) is, not surprisingly, a highly "transnational" community with strong links to migrant-sending communities in Mexico. As Rouse observes, in many senses, even those Aguilillans who have lived in Redwood City do not think of themselves as "settlers" in the U.S.: they hope, soon or eventually, to return to Aguililla where English-speaking ability and other basic skills development offered by the adult education system has little value. We see the high proportion of Redwood City respondents who say they "don't know" whether they will seek to further develop their skills (74%) to stem, in part, from longstanding ambiguity about future personal and career decisions.

Labor market factors --in Sanger, the existence of a farm labor market dominated by Spanish-speaking workers, in Redwood City the availability of many jobs in household work required few English-language skills-- also seem to exert a negative influence on demand among some sub-groups.[28] Factors such as age, educational attainment, gender,

[28] An important finding from our study of farmworker labor market behavior in the post-IRCA period was that there is a substantial group of "loyal" farmworkers who will remain in farmwork throughout their working lives. For details see David Griffith and Ed Kissam, **Working Poor: Farmworkers in the United States**, Temple University Press, 1995. However, the decision to remain in farmwork or not is sensitive to changes in working conditions and job stability so declines in working conditions and the arrival of new waves of better-educated workers (some of whom were represented in our focus group sample) for whom farmwork is simply a point of entry to the U.S. labor market may increase demand.

rural or urban background, length of time in the U.S., past adult learning experience, and family commitments also interact to determine each individual's future educational plans. We analyze these interactions subsequently. Here the main point is that there is strong immediate demand from less than half of the LEP community. Presumably, a market-driven system would seek to configure itself to respond especially to their learning objectives and needs.

Despite possible variations in demand among LEP adults belonging to different ethnic groups, from a system-wide planning perspective, rational determination of proper system capacity is driven primarily by demand from Spanish-speaking LEPs because of their numerical prevalence.[29] And, although there are demonstrated variations from community to community in demand, the evidence suggests that planning should be oriented toward responding to actual levels of market demand. Nonetheless, as we detail in **Chapter 5**, current system capacity continues to be inadequate to meet even the expected demand from strongly-motivated LEP adult learners in some communities (most notably, Long Beach) among our case study communities).

More realistic estimates of current demand for services among LEP adults provides a basis for a shift of resources to service quality improvement and to system re-configuration to address the specific barriers which preclude the enrollment of some LEP sub-populations.

Need/Demand for ESL-Citizenship Instruction

A pressing policy concern in the context of federal "welfare reform" legislation is that legal permanent residents in California lose many of their rights to publicly-funded services. "Immigration reform" further compromises legal permanent residents' rights and program eligibility. In the context of an overall anti-immigrant trend this has made naturalization a major priority -- for legal permanent residents themselves, immigrant advocates, and for local government. Focus group data, as well as anecdotal information from the field, show that demands for ESL-Citizenship classes is growing rapidly and will continue to escalate for the next several years.

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[29] If we were, for example, to extrapolate from the Spanish-speaking demand indicator and assume a similar level of demand among other LEP language minorities, an error of 30% in the demand function (e.g. demand for services from 65% of non-Hispanic LEPS instead of 33%) would make a difference of only about 175,000 slots of the "ballpark" figure of 900,000 to be served per year.

We conclude this chapter with an examination of some of the quantitative data which bear on this immediate issue. Additional information on the data sources used for this estimation and analytic uncertainties associated with the estimate are included in **Appendix 1**.

Pre-1990 immigrants currently (January 1997) eligible for citizenship

In 1990 there were approximately 4.5 million foreign-born persons in California likely to be eligible for naturalization.[30] In the ensuing years since the 1990 census, approximately 958,000 of these legal permanent residents (LPR's) who might have needed ESL-Citizenship assistance were granted citizenship. Approximately another 152,000 were denied. Thus, as of September 1, 1996 (the latest data for which INS data) are available) there remain approximately 3,390,000 who might possibly need assistance with the naturalization process.

However, a sub-set of the 1990 foreign-born legal permanent residents who are not yet citizens are LPR children under 12 years of age whose parents have not yet sought citizenship. As they are not yet 18 they are not part of the universe of need for services (although they will be in subsequent years). About 275,000 of the LPR's fall into this category. Thus, there remain about 3.1 million adult LPR's (although some of them are English-proficient, well-educated, or both) potentially needing naturalization services.[31]

Demand for ESL-Citizenship Assistance in Relation to Naturalization Universe of Need

In order to estimate <u>actual</u> demand for ESL-Citizenship, ESL-only, or citizenship-only instruction assistance among naturalization applicants it is necessary to calculate: a) the proportion of eligible LPR's whose English-language ability and/or educational attainment

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[30] This entails some substantial uncertainties as the decennial census only identifies foreign-born persons vs. U.S-born ones, and citizenship status, not whether a persons is a legal resident or not. In 1990 there were approximately 8.2 million foreign-born persons in California. Of this foreign-born population, approximately 2.6 million were already naturalized and about 1.1 million were illegal immigrants who have little likelihood of becoming naturalized. Thus there remained approximately 4.5 million needing naturalization services in 1990.

[31] A minor adjustment must be made for the LPR's who have died in the period from 1990-1995 before naturalizing, approximately 15,000 persons. Thus, there remain approximately 3.1 million adults potentially needing ESL/citizenship services.

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allows them to move through the naturalization process unaided and b) the proportion of eligible LPR's who seek citizenship (historically low but currently increasing dramatically as a result of anti-immigrant legislation.

In 1990, about 39% of the census-identified foreign-born adults with less than a college education who live in California were limited in English. National data from the Westat study show that, in 1993, about 30% of IRCA-legalized LPR's were limited in English.[32] SALS data are comparable and show, in particular, that the English-language literacy skills of those reporting themselves to be limited in English are, indeed, quite low. There is, however, substantial uncertainty regarding level of need for naturalization assistance as the educational profile and English-language proficiency of those who have already been naturalized (as distinguished from those who have not yet naturalized) are not easily determined.[33] Nonetheless, these data sources suggest that, if the English-language proficiency and educational attainment of adult LPR's in need of naturalization is similar to that of the overall foreign-born population (as we believe it is), then at least 70% of the LPR population seeking naturalization might need ESL-Citizenship assistance -- about 2,170,000 persons.[34]

The final consideration in assessing potential demand for ESL-Citizenship services is whether eligible limited English low-education LPR's will, in fact, plan to seek citizenship. Traditionally, only a minority of LPR's have sought citizenship; however, in the current environment, naturalization application flow has skyrocketed. Since it is not possible to tell what the cumulative proportion who seek citizenship will be, we asked SSHS respondents about their citizenship status and birthplace (but not legal status) and

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[32] The national Westat sample is likely to include more English-proficient immigrants than California. However, the population sampled had probably lived in the U.S., for a shorter period of time than the overall population of LPR's. Time did not permit a breakout for California only.

[33] English-language proficiency and educational attainment are, presumably, available in each prospective citizen's full file but these data are not collected on the N-400 or reported as part of the INS standard tracking system. We infer language proficiency and educational attainment from two sources: a) the 1990 PUMS and b) the Westat survey.

[34] While the LPR population includes a minority of English-proficient and/or well-educated persons, the LEP population includes a minority of unauthorized immigrants not eligible for naturalization. The central issue, of course, is how these two classifications overlap.

intentions to naturalize as a basis for projecting demand.[35] A very small proportion (4%) were U.S.-born. Another 7% were already naturalized. The remaining 89% were foreign-born non-citizens.

Four-fifths of the foreign-born SSHS respondents who were not yet naturalized said they planned to apply for citizenship. It is not clearly exactly what this means for effective ESL-Citizenship demand (since we do not know the exact proportion of SSHS respondents who were LPR's and, thus, eligible to apply for citizenship). Nonetheless, the responses clearly indicate a high level of demand.[36] Limited English-proficient Asian, African, Caribbean, and European refugees and immigrants who make up a small minority of California LPR's are likely to seek citizenship at no lower levels than the Mexican, Central American, and South American respondents to the SSHS. We estimate that current demand for ESL-Citizenship assistance among LEP adults is, thus, at least 1.7 million persons.[37]

A particular pressing concern is that more than 100,000 citizenship applicants who have already begun the naturalization process were in a "pending" status, most because of their inability to pass the citizenship tests or demonstrate adequate English-language proficiency.[38] This sub-population is one which has an immediate and urgent need for ESL-Citizenship assistance.

The other pressing concern is that several vulnerable sub-populations who have not yet applied for naturalization will lose eligibility for public assistance even before final state legislation and regulations to implement TANF (i.e., the replacement for AFDC) are developed. These sub-populations include more than 350,000 non-citizen LPR's who receive SSI and a similar number of Food Stamp recipients. We assume that the

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[35] We considered a query about immigration status, while relevant and valuable, untenable as part of a household survey as we would, in essence, be asking about illegal activity. In fact, the environment in August-October, 1996 was quite polarized. Many SSHS respondents expressed (to Spanish-speaking Mexican and Mexican-American interviewers) high levels of distrust as to why "the government" wanted to know anything about any immigrants.

[36] If the entire population surveyed in the SSHS consisted of LPR's, then this would imply demand from 80% of the LPR population; if, as we believe, most of those who said they didn't plan to apply for citizenship because they would not qualify, then the "yes" rate is even higher among LPR's.

[37] This assumes that 80% of naturalization-eligible LPR's would actually seek to naturalize.

overwhelming majority of this portion of the public assistance population are limited English low-education adults.[39]

Phasing of demand for services is a critical issue. As a result of combined efforts by immigrant advocacy groups and local government, there will be extremely sharp escalation of demand for adult education ESL-Citizenship services in 1997 as this population seeks to naturalize. Regional coalitions are being developed in, at least, Los Angeles, Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Marin, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Monterey counties to undertake massive naturalization efforts in 1997. The areas participating in these efforts include more than half of the state's LPR population. While priority will be given to SSI recipients in the naturalization campaign, other citizenship-eligible persons can be expected to apply as a result of outreach and publicity. Although a minority may week waivers of the bar based on their work history in the United States, naturalization will be their most efficient route to economic survival. Because this population is so financially vulnerable it will be particularly important to avoid situations in which the naturalization applications of those who cannot receive waivers are "stalled" due to inadequate English-language ability.

The adult education system will be placed under a great strain, as it was in connection with IRCA, in responding to this immediate "emergency" demand for ESL-Citizenship services.

The specific overall mix of ESL-Citizenship services needed depends on the particular characteristics of those who come forward for naturalization. Providers' experience to date suggests that preparation for the demonstration of basic knowledge of history and government is less difficult than developing the English-proficiency required to meet the requirements of the INS examiner interview. While older LPR's who have lived in the United States for a longer period of time can seek to have the English-language requirements waived, the English-proficiency of more recent immigrants is lower. Because, as discussed above, life in immigrant enclaves requires such minimal English-

[38] We do not have data on the exact status of pending N-400's but the final disposition of previous cases suggests that almost all are due to English-proficiency problems or not passing the examination with English-language ability the main problem.

[39] A small minority are disabled children. However, their vulnerability stems, in fact, from their parents' status as LPR's and, thus, the SSI recipient children are a proxy for naturalization demands from their parents.

language proficiency and because opportunities to practice English are so rare, many of the IRCA-era immigrants, particularly farmworkers who received LPR status under the SAW program face major challenges in demonstrating proficiency in "simple" spoken English.[40]

Post-1990 Legal Immigrants -- Need and Demand for ESL-Citizenship Services from 1997-2000

Another 1.4 million foreign-born California residents were admitted as LPR's in the 1990-1995 period. These persons will become part of the need for services as they become eligible for citizenship (after five years in LPR status). Also, the 275,000 LPR's who were 12 years old or less but whose parents have not yet sought citizenship must also be considered to be part of the universe of need, as they will not have been automatically granted citizenship based on their parent's application once they are 18. However, the proportion of the LPR's admitted in 1990-1995 who were children under 12 must, again, be subtracted from the universe of need; they number about 112,000 The younger LPR's who arrived as children and who have grown up and gone to school in California are not likely to require a high level of services as most are English-proficient. Thus there is probably a net universe of need in the coming 4 years of about 980,000 who would need ESL-Citizenship assistance to naturalize. Assuming, again, that about 80% of the citizenship-eligible LEP adults seek ESL-Citizenship instructional support, demand is about 784,000 persons.

[40] Development of English-language proficiency is positively correlated with length of time in the United States and negatively correlated with linguistic isolation and age at arrival. Given these considerations, farmworkers who came to the United States in their 30's but who are not yet old enough for the English-language waiver are likely to be a population with a high level of need for intensive ESL.

Chapter 3

Strategies to Broaden Learning Options

Overview

LEP adults' needs include access to a service delivery system which is configured to be as responsive to them as possible and which provides appropriate and effective ways of learning as well as building the skills LEP adults need. Redesign of the adult education system has promise as a means to improve service access, as a means to enhance service effectiveness and as a means for accomplishing more with limited resources.

CDE's strategic planning efforts have given high priority to this issue in general, exploring how best to respond to the level and diversity of demand for adult education services. A practical preoccupation has been to assess the utility of competing strategies for broadening the current service menu so as to provide the most extensive possible range of learning options for adult learners. Possibilities include new approaches to scheduling and structuring classroom-based programs, increased emphasis on volunteer-based programs, and utilization of a variety of distance-learning technologies.

A diversified service "menu" for both classroom-based instruction and alternative learning modalities holds promise, both as a means to improve access and as a strategy for responding to the particular needs and learning styles of persons seeking to improve their skills. In general, broad social trends are making the once-idealistic vision of "anytime, anyplace" lifelong learning an everyday reality for many Californians. At the workplace, at home, and in a wide range of informally-organized groups, both self-directed and peer-based adult learning is becoming commonplace.

Consequently, the SSHS and focus groups included a series of questions about possible strategies for enhancing access to classroom-based instruction, together with an exploration of the desirability of several alternative instructional modalities as a way to pursue adult learning goals. The feasibility of using non-classroom-based program designs to improve adult learning opportunities has been of particular interest because the attractiveness of these learning modalities would, theoretically, be expected to vary from group to group and, thus, LEP adults' reactions might differ significantly from those of the general adult education service population.

Scheduling Options for Classroom Instruction

In the SSHS we explored with respondents the desirability of a variety of scheduling options for classroom instruction. These options included both the standard options usually available currently (e.g. evening classes 2-3 nights a week, morning classes, 2-3 days a week) and scheduling alternatives (e.g. an intensive 2-day weekend class). **Table 3-1** below shows the relative attractiveness of each of these options.

Table 3-1
Attractiveness of Different Scheduling Options

Scheduling Option	Would Work OK	Can't Say	Not OK
Standard Schedules			
Evening class, 2-3 days/week (N=162)	65%	13%	22%
Morning class, 2-3 days/week (N=147)	42%	18%	40%
Afternoon class, 2-3 days/week (N=148)	53%	35%	12%
Possible Alternatives			
Intensive 2-day weekend class (N=151)	53%	27%	20%
Intensive daily class for 2 weeks (N=121)	35%	17%	48%
Group study 1 day/wk., consultation TBA (N=144)	54%	14%	32%

* *Respondents could answer that any number of scheduling options would suit them.*

Table 3-1 suggests that the standard adult school option of evening classes 2-3 nights per week is the most popular scheduling option but that other options are, indeed feasible. The program design option of one day of group study per week with consultation on a flexible schedule (a program design option actually offered at some satellite schools as part of Long Beach's 5% Project) is popular across all sub-populations of LEP adults because the flexibility (and implied individual attention) is attractive. The least popular option across the board was the 2-week intensive class. Many, particularly persons who were working, felt this sort of arrangement was simply not feasible, given the many commitments they needed to juggle.

In terms of plant utilization and efforts to reach potential learners for whom the standard scheduling options do not work, the most promising option appears to be the

intensive weekend class in which learners could "get into" a subject which they really wanted to learn. All focus groups liked the idea of flexibility in adult education. The focus group discussion included no complaints about class scheduling.

Alternative Program Designs -- Study Circles and Volunteer-based Learning

We queried SSHS respondents about two specific program design options currently used in place of standard classroom-based instruction in some communities -- study circles and volunteer-based programs. Both were considered to be viable options by about half of the respondents but volunteer programs were ranked slightly higher (with 54% of respondents saying they would be a "very good" idea) than study circles (which appealed to 44% of the respondents). There were some objections to each of these options. Perhaps the leading concern was whether volunteers would be reliable and could be counted on to be good instructors.

The concerns about study circles reflected uncertainty as to whether such groups would maintain their direction and focus and whether they would be stable. Several respondents stressed that in either an informal learning environment or in a classroom setting the key issue was to have an experienced teacher. One respondent went on to observe quite directly that it was necessary to have a bilingual native speaker of English to help one learn English based on her adult school experience with an ESL teacher who she couldn't understand. Extrapolating from this experience, she felt study circles wouldn't work. However, one respondent who had concerns about the stability of study groups said that adult schools could motivate study circle coordinators by promising them a formal title. She felt that, even if there were problems with expertise, peer-based learning would work well for ESL beginners. Another consideration raised in connection with study circles was whether informal settings for learning would be safe since the neighborhood was a dangerous one (Long Beach).

Although there were many reservations about volunteer-based tutoring and peer-based study circles, some respondents were very excited about the potential of informal modes of learning. The idea of learning in an informal setting in the community was very attractive to some, conveying the idea that students would be in fairly subtle ways more in control of what they learned. Women in particular, liked the idea of ESL classes in connection with children's programs (e.g. Head Start). In Long Beach one respondent was currently going to an adult school program while her children were in school and was

very pleased with the design. In Sanger, one housewife, for example, enthusiastically suggested that it would be a good idea to have classes in a commons area which was part of the apartment complex in which she lived. Another woman thought it would be marvelous to have a study circle outdoors in a local park (in Long Beach) but was a bit concerned about gang members (*cholitos*) hanging around.

Distance Learning -- Broadcast TV and radio

SSHS respondents were relatively interested in the idea of using broadcast TV as an alternative learning modality. Two-fifths (40%) said they thought they might watch a TV series designed to help people learn English. They were, however, much less interested in radio as a medium for adult education with less than one-fifth (18%) saying they would listen to a program designed to help them learn English. In short, broadcast TV was fairly attractive and radio marginally attractive for "learning (oral) English." Both media were considered less viable for learning other subjects (e.g. math, work skills). A small minority considered TV marginally useful for learning about consumer issues and health issues but this interest was not expressed with much enthusiasm.

Respondents' had different reservations about each medium. The most commonly articulated concern about television was that there is competition in the household about what program to watch and competition would be even worse if someone wanted to watch an "educational" program when others (parents often mentioned their children) wanted to watch the ESL program. In large, crowded households of "lone male" workers in Sanger, it was agreed there would be similar competition among the men in the household if some wanted to watch educational program materials but others didn't. In the case of radio, respondents were clear that education was not an "appropriate" sort of content for radio which they associated more with highly formatted musical programming, often used as background for ongoing home or work based activities. A few thought that radio might be useful in teaching some limited things, such as providing consumer education tips as part of a talk show format but overall interest was very low.

The SSHS findings on broadcast media reinforce the conventional wisdom about broadcast media which is that media use behaviors, once established, are very difficult to change. They are also consistent with findings from other studies of potential uses of broadcast media for reaching LEP adults with one pro-social message or another. The

findings from this research are that there is often a high level of personal interaction around the TV set (e.g. joking, trading stories, arguments) and a fairly low level of consistent attention to content. In general, a less concrete but real consideration about broadcast media is that group learning, in either a classroom setting or in an informal setting, is seen to be important as a way of overcoming the social isolation experienced by immigrants who have arrived in California fairly recently.

The SSHS findings deserve attention as part of California's strategic planning in the area of distance learning as they indicate that: a) attracting LEP TV viewers from their favorite TV channels to the PBS and cable outlets likely to air ESL programs such as **CROSSROADS CAFE** will be very challenging, and b) the quality of attention among viewers who are interested will be variable. As we discuss below, attention should turn to non-broadcast use of such materials.

Distance Learning -- Video and Audio Materials on Demand

SSHS respondents were enthusiastic about the idea of making video and audio materials available to be borrowed by learners pursuing a self-directed course of study. More than three-quarters (77%) said that they would definitely borrow videocassette materials and more than half (55%) said they would use audiocassette-based materials. The availability of such materials provided a much more satisfactory approach, in SSHS respondents minds, to the ideal of "anytime, anyplace" learning than reliance on broadcast media. Interviewers noted that several SSHS respondents had already purchased one of two privately-produced and distributed video instruction packages -- "Follow Me To America" or "Ingles Sin Barreras." However, those who were familiar with these materials didn't think that they were very useful. Also, the cost for the entire series was said to be much too high.

Computer-Based Learning in Informal Settings

The explosion of the World-wide Web and the rapidly-decreasing costs of Internet access greatly expand the technological feasibility of computer-based adult learning options. OTAN Director, John Fleischman, has noted that new software strategies will

increasingly distribute learning software to end-users on disk but update and expand its functionality via the Internet, making educational software more flexible and affordable.[1]

We asked SSHS respondents their opinions about the utility of facilitating adult learners' access "to computers which have programs on them for people to search for the information they wanted to know and to practice their skills." This was an extremely popular option with almost two-thirds (63%) saying that they thought it was a very good way to learn.

We followed up with a query about people's current access to personal computers and solicited respondent's opinions about the best kind of place to put computers for "drop in" learning programs. As expected, less than 5% have their own computers or access to a friend's computer. Those who thought computer-based learning was useful thought several different kinds of locations would work well. The most popular place for locating such computers was in a library setting (approved by 92%), followed by elementary school (65%), high school (63%), and community-based organization (28%). Respondents were divided about the best times for such drop-in access, with approximately the same proportion favoring morning, afternoon, and evening drop-in times. Presumably, with this pattern for access demand, there would be minimal bottlenecks and equipment could probably be used effectively for up to 13 or 14 hours per day. It was felt that there should be access to this type of learner-based program at least 5 days a week.

Workplace Literacy Program Designs

The final question on alternative learning modalities related to the utility of employer-supported workplace learning programs either linked to developing on the job skills or simply as a benefit to employees. Almost half (48%) of the employed persons who answered this question said it would be very useful to offer such a program where they worked. Of those who thought this would be a useful learning option, about half said that they would, themselves, participate in such a program. The main reservation expressed by respondents about workplace literacy programs was that it didn't make sense in their particular situation (e.g. housecleaners, restaurant workers) or they didn't think their employer would be willing to sponsor such a program. One SSHS respondent, for

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[1] Presentation to Adult Education Strategic Planning Committee, October 11, 1996.

example, said that she didn't think an employer who wouldn't give workers breaks would sponsor a workplace learning program. Another respondent said that she was sure the supervisors in the packing shed where she worked would oppose that kind of an effort because, as she put it, "*Son muy despotas*" ("They're 'despotic", i.e., concerned about controlling workers).

Focus Group Perceptions of Alternative Learning Modalities

Participants in the Latino, Cambodian, and Hmong focus groups were all aware that people could learn both in informal and formal contexts -- at home, from family, including children, friends, in the course of day to day public contact, and with support from public institutions.

Both groups named a number of informal learning venues, including libraries, community centers, as well as learning from broadcast media. The Cambodian and Hmong focus group discussants also mentioned "church" or "the temple" as a learning venue but Latinos did not think of the church in this context. All groups watch TV extensively. The Latinos also listen to radio heavily. However, most of the Latinos listen to Spanish-language radio or TV which are widely available in all the case study communities. In general, Spanish-language is widely available throughout California, but programs in Asian languages such as Hmong and Khmer are much less available. However, some program segments are broadcast in Asian languages in areas where these language speakers are concentrated. Focus group participants talked fairly extensively about some of the difficulties they encountered in their unaided efforts to learn English -- people's impatience, lack of time to deal with them, their difficulty in getting to a point where they could follow English-language broadcast media.

The Cambodian and Hmong focus group participants differed from the Latinos in emphasizing how much one learns from one's children. However, neither Cambodians nor Latinos thought that learning from one's family was very effective. Among the Cambodians, the idea of learning English from family members (and by implication family-based ESL or literacy programs) was not at all well received. As one focus group participant put it, "Family members always say things like, 'You are stupid, crazy, why can't you learn by yourself?'" Another participant who thought that family members might be helpful questioned their competency and teaching skills. A Latino participant expressed

the concern that family members would laugh at him when he tried to pronounce a word; he went on to say, "That's very difficult because there are few opportunities for me to practice." Another young Latino focus group respondent said that if he tried to speak English to his sisters who are fluent in English, "they ignore me." A Hmong focus group participant expressed very positive attitudes about learning from friends, "It is a good idea to talk to friends because sometimes you know things that your friends do not and sometimes they know things that you do not."

Interestingly, Latino focus group participants, in the course of discussing skills development, stressed the importance of concentration, willpower, focus, and motivation much more heavily than the issue of practice and skills deployment. They saw their environment as one with many "distractions" -- family, work, entertainment. These distractions were seen as taking them away from a course of learning and, only seldom, as opportunities to engage in skills development. Focus group discussants from all the ethnic groups saw problems in learning as relating primarily to "memory" constraints, not to lack of skills drill. These perspectives deserve further attention as they suggest that such "folk" theories of learning (and barriers to adult learning) may play a powerful role in determining adult learning success. Presumably, part of an explicit curriculum on "learning to learn" might introduce new perspectives on how adults learn and how to facilitate success.

The focus group participants' views on the utility of broadcast media as a vehicle for distance learning were similar to those of SSHS survey respondents in that they saw the idea as interesting, perhaps promising. However, there was concern about distractions in a home environment. The general idea was that TV might be a useful modality for supplementing classroom-based instruction but not a good stand-alone instructional strategy. As was the case with the SSHS respondents, radio was seen as a medium for listening to music, not learning (although one respondent added that radio could help with pronunciation).

Some Hmong focus group participants thought TV was not as good for adults as for children, "Kids can learn from TV but for us adults, the more we look the more dizzy we get." However, others thought that TV had potential if programming were in Hmong and if there were time to watch TV. Some watched a local Hmong TV broadcast for news about world events. The Cambodian focus group of in-school LEP adults was particularly positive about watching TV as a way to learn spoken English. One respondent said,

"I don't see there is a point that people can not learn from TV, radio, (and video), unless that person is very lazy and mentally ill. For example, one of my friends, she never had time to come to school but she knows a lot of English by watching television on Channel 28 with her young children at home."

In the focus group discussions, participants had a chance to consider the idea of "loaner" videos in more depth than had the survey respondents. These discussions continued to see home video in a positive light but did reveal more misgivings about videocassette-based learning than the survey responses. These misgivings related to participants' experience with currently-available commercial video -- "too expensive", "hard to concentrate on them."

Summary

Efforts to extend adult education service options beyond the traditional realm of classroom-based instruction have great promise for overcoming the personal barriers faced by LEP adults in accessing adult education services. However, no single approach will work for every group. Efforts to develop innovative program designs will need to take into consideration learners' perceptions of the pros and cons of non-traditional program designs and work diligently to overcome their concerns and fine-tune the instructional designs which appear most promising.

Alternative instructional designs, in addition to their potential for overcoming barriers to program participation, also have promise as a means to provide LEP adults with a way to engage in lifelong learning. To fulfill this promise, it will be necessary to, first, build awareness of the efficacy of learning outside the classroom and, secondly, provide learners with the "learning to learn" skills to successfully pursue programs of self-directed learning. A common concern which was expressed was that people wanted interactive instruction -- teachers who could answer questions, help students in areas where they were having difficulty. This quite reasonable preoccupation with personal interaction as part of effective learning is a valuable consideration in both design of alternative instructional service delivery systems and traditional classroom instruction.[2]

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[2] In some cases, classroom instruction while face to face is not adequately designed to allow personal interactions.

Efforts to configure California's adult education system to facilitate multiple modes of adult learning have, in addition to their operational attractiveness, implications for service quality because, at least in principle, an important aspect of building SCANS-linked skills is to develop facility in acquiring information in a wide variety of contexts. Ultimately, the move toward a system which permits multiple access points for adult learning will require increased attention to the "case management" aspects of self-directed learning. Even the most successful self-directed learners can be expected to require periodic coaching and problem-solving assistance in face to face encounters with master teachers or other personnel (including paraprofessionals) providing them with advice and consultation.

The analysis of the statewide distribution of LEP adults in need of adult education services presented in **Chapter 1** suggests that, in some parts of the state, and for some language groups, traditional classroom-based instruction will not ever be cost-effective, requiring adoption of alternative service delivery strategies as a necessity. In these areas, particularly, careful attention as to how best to combine different strands of support for adult learning into an integrated program design (e.g. consideration of how best to configure volunteer-based study circle activities or tutoring combined with distance learning) have great promise.

An ongoing problem is that reliance on instructor-centered classroom-based instructional designs has been so pervasive, that there has been little attention in the field to the issues related to effectively designing multi-stranded programs to support continuing adult learning. While some employment training providers and human service agencies, particularly those which have worked extensively on welfare-to-work issues have routinely relied on multi-stranded programs (e.g. combining counseling, classroom ABE/ESL instruction, vocational training, and post-program follow-up support) this has not been an area where adult schools have been active - presumably because current funding is linked to in-class seat time.[3] Even alternative educational service providers such as libraries, volunteer-based programs, and community organizations, which may have provided some sort of support for adult learning outside the classroom (e.g. personal coaching to pass the INS citizenship/language proficiency examination; tutoring), have not been very innovative

[3] The Center for Employment Training has been nationally recognized as a leader in this area, based on a national evaluation of a range of promising welfare-to-work program designs by the Rockefeller Foundation. CET, building on the OIC experience, was an earlier leader in providing support services, including counseling, concurrent enrollment in ABE/ESL and skills training, and follow-up support.

in this realm -- presumably due to lack of financial support for the costs associated with managing a multi-stranded integrated program.

Planning deliberations in connection with the California Distance Learning Project support the proposition that new solutions to the problem of linking innovation and accountability are necessary for distance learning to realize its full potential. The Project consensus was that in this area there were many opportunities for collaborative efforts among different agencies.[4] Conference participants in the California Distance Learning Symposium pointed specifically to the need for credible assessment instruments for pre-post assessment of learner competencies as a necessary foundation for reimbursement on some basis other than seat time.

[4] California Distance Learning Project, "California Distance Learning Symposium: Priorities and Recommendations", November 1, 1996.

Chapter 4

The Needs of Sub-Groups within the LEP Population and Implications for Needs Assessment

Overview

A central concern in this study has been the need to go beyond summary measures of educational attainment and English-language ability to develop a richer and more finely-textured way of looking at service needs. In **Chapter 2**, the analysis of the LEP population's learning needs reviewed the social environment in which LEP adults live and reported on LEP adults' skills development needs using a multi-dimensional composite index of "service need" based on self-assessed skills. This index allowed us to explore separately adult learners' needs in different domains of life functioning -- workplace, family life, community, and lifelong learning.

In this section, we examine how the needs of several different sub-groups within the LEP population vary. As discussed in our theoretical overview of the research on the social environment in which LEP adults live their lives, it is important to recognize that in the real world in which immigrants live, "educational need" is not an independent absolute thing but, rather, a complex measure of how different facts of adults' lives interact, how these affect people's assessment of their own skills in different functional domains and, consequently, their own aspirations and demand for service from adult schools or other educational providers.

Ultimately, among LEP adults, as among all adult learners, there is a broad spectrum of needs, suggesting the value of efforts to individualize instruction to respond to each individual's particular situation, learning style, and personal objectives. Nonetheless, for the purpose of planning an effective service delivery system, it is useful to consider the issue of distinct "service populations" and what implications the differences among these distinct service populations (or "market segments") have for configuring California's adult education system to achieve maximum responsiveness to a heterogeneous LEP population.

In this chapter, we identify several key sub-groups and highlight some of the important ways in which their needs are similar and some of the ways in which they appear to be different. The sub-population groups we compare are the following:

1. Women and men.
2. "Low" schooling vs. "High" schooling (0-7 years vs. 8 or more years)
3. Long-term immigrants vs. short-term (0-9 years in the U.S, 10-19 years, 20+)
4. Immediate student prospects vs. uncertain (plan school within next 2-3 years)

We compare each of these groups in terms of their need profile in each of the four domains of skills development, examining how well they assess their ability to function in their current environment, in an English-language environment, and the net difference in those environments. The "net difference" is a particularly interesting measure of need as it is an indicator of the potential "value added" by English-language acquisition; it takes into account the extent to which a SSHS respondent is already well adapted to the circumstances of his or her current situation.

We then discuss some of the ways in which different factors appear to interact in shaping LEP adults' needs in different domains of life functioning. The discussion of multiple factors which are involved in determining the extent of LEP adults' needs in each domain is based on multi-variate modeling. The models presented relate a set of independent "standard" univariate variables specifying individuals' socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to the dependent variables used to specify LEP adults' "baseline" skills in functioning in their current environment, in an English-only environment, and the differences between their functional ability in these distinct spheres of social interaction.

Finally, we consider what our findings regarding the determinants of self-assessed skills and the focus group discussions imply for the task of assessing LEP adults' individual competencies and skills needs. We conclude by sketching out fundamental principles which might guide development of "appropriate" assessment strategies for LEP adults.

SSHS-based Analyses of LEP Sub-Populations' Needs

In this section we describe our findings based on SSHS survey results for key sub-groups among LEP adults in need of adult education services.

Women and Men

Women and mean assess their ability to function in their current circumstances of family life and engage in lifelong learning quite similarly. However, women assess themselves somewhat lower in terms of ability to cope with current workplace skills demands and function effectively in community life.

Based on the data on different domains, the most striking statistically significant distinction between female and male respondents' needs lies in the difference between their self-assessed workplace and community functioning in an English-language environment. In terms of workplace functioning, women feel both absolutely and relatively less prepared than men to function in an English-language workplace as well as in their current circumstances. This suggests the particular utility of English-language skills acquisition as a means for women to expand their career options and workplace prospects which they already feel more uncertain about than do men.

Women feel slightly better prepared than men to function in their current family life circumstances. The real distinction between women and men in this regard is that women's lack of English poses greater problems to them than men in the context of community life. This finding has several implications, the most obvious of which is that even women who feel quite well-prepared to deal with most in-home and in-family facets of family life can be expected to encounter difficulties in dealing with their children's teachers and educational institutions. Despite these differences, the data show that both women and men generally rate themselves as being able to deal moderately well with the current circumstances of their lives. At the same time, they recognize that English-language limitations seriously constrain their ability to function in a sphere of social interactions where English-language ability is needed.

Table Series 4-1 on the next page shows the mean scores for men and women in each of the four major domains of functioning -- both "baseline" self-assessed ability

functioning in their current circumstances and in an English-language environment. In this and the following table series, statistically significant differences in mean skills levels are asterisked.

Table Series 4-1:
Self-Assessed Skills Reported by Men and Women

Domain: Workplace
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	Men	Women
Current Circumstances	3.35	3.17
English-only*	1.72	1.38

* p<.01

Domain: Family Life
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	Men	Women
Current Circumstances	3.31	3.36
English-only	1.61	1.42

Domain: Community Life
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	Men	Women
Current Circumstances	2.87	2.68
English-only*	1.46	1.26

*p<.05

Domain: Lifelong Learning
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	Men	Women
Current Circumstances	2.95	2.96
English-only	1.53	1.46

Self-Assessed Skills in Relation to Schooling

The SSHS sample appears to be quite representative of the overall Spanish-speaking LEP population in terms of educational attainment. The mean educational attainment of the SSHS sample is 6.6 years of schooling. This level of total schooling is very similar to home country schooling as the mean level of schooling in the U.S. is .17 years (due to a very small proportion of SSHS respondents who had received such schooling).

There is substantial variation from community to community in educational attainment. Long Beach respondents have the highest educational levels with 7.4 years of schooling, followed by Redwood City with a mean of 6.9 years, and, finally, Sanger with the lowest mean level of schooling --5.3 years.[1] It is not surprising, of course, that Sanger's Latino LEP adults have the lowest level of schooling, as the area is a farmworker one and studies have consistently shown the link between migration from rural areas of Mexico and low levels of schooling. In these areas most children join their parents in working and farmwork. What is, perhaps, more surprising is that there are such sharp differences between the two urban case study communities and the rural one.

This serves to highlight the need for careful local assessment of learners' needs at the community level. For example, Sanger, while seeming to even informed observers to be quite similar to other immigrant settlement areas, actually has much more poorly educated arrivals and much more extensive use of English than our other case study communities. This, in turn, appears to be related to the relatively high proportion of SSHS respondents in Sanger who plan to enroll in an adult education course in the foreseeable future.

The SSHS data show that educational attainment is, indeed, correlated with self-assessed functional skills but that there are important differences in the relationship between educational attainment and functioning in different domains. As in the analysis of differences in self-assessed skills by gender, we examine here both "baseline" skills and skills in an English-language setting.

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[1] The differences between communities in the mean level of educational attainment are highly statistically significant ($p<.0001$).

A fundamental finding from the SSHS is that formal schooling is modestly but significantly related to the ability to function well in the typical sort of workplace where most immigrants work. Although these sorts of jobs are often referred to as "unskilled" this sort of low-wage workplace may require substantial skills. What is needed is often interpersonal skills which are not learned in school or work know-how acquired on the job. The better-educated SSHS respondents assessed themselves as being substantially better able to function both in their current work environment and in an English language environment. This is interesting since level of educational attainment is inversely related to length of time in the U.S. among Latino immigrants (and, thus, to exposure to English. Home country schooling while not providing many advantages in terms of currently marketable skills, can probably be correlated with self-confidence and, also, with actual skills for dealing with an English-language workplace. This suggests, conversely, that the less-educated respondents encounter more problems in terms of dealing with the English-language workplace environment, in part due to literacy constraints, in part due to lower levels of self-confidence about their adaptability.

Educational attainment is also surprisingly strongly related to SSHS respondents' assessment of their ability to deal with family life issues in English. Better-educated respondents feel better prepared to deal with family life issues both in their current circumstances and in English-language contexts.

The realm of dealing with issues of community life in English is an area where SSHS respondents with little education see themselves at a particular disadvantage, uniformly rating their ability to function as "low." In this area, LEP adults with more schooling are somewhat better off. Nonetheless, for all groups among the Spanish-speaking LEP population, the domain of community life transactions in English is a very uncertain one. This finding has important implications for the general issue of civic participation and the goal of fostering meaningful processes of democratic governance, suggesting that the majority of Spanish-speaking LEP adults are almost entirely isolated from in the English-dominant dialogue of political life at the local, state, and federal levels.

Finally (and unsurprisingly) educational attainment is strongly linked to self-assessed ability to engage in lifelong learning. This finding highlights the need to provide adult learners who have little experience with formal or structured learning a strong foundation of instruction for ongoing learning.

Table Series 4-2 below provides an overview of SSHS respondents' functional skills levels in relation to levels of schooling.

Table Series 4-2:
Self-Assessed Skills in Relation to Educational Attainment

Domain: Workplace
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	0-7 Yrs. Schooling	8+ Yrs. Schooling
Current Circumstances*	3.07	3.48
English-only**	1.30	1.83

*p<.01; **p<.01

Domain: Family Life
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	0-7 Yrs. Schooling	8+ Yrs. Schooling
Current Circumstances	3.24	3.48
English-only*	1.28	1.80

*p<.01

Domain: Community Life
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	0-7 Yrs. Schooling	8+ Yrs. Schooling
Current Circumstances	2.68	2.88
English-only*	1.12	1.64

*p<.01

Domain: Lifelong Learning
Scale of Functional Ability
1----------->5
Low **High**

Mean Ability in:	0-7 Yrs. Schooling	8+ Yrs. Schooling
Current Circumstances*	2.63	3.46
English-only**	1.25	1.81

*p<.01; ** p<.01

Skills Levels of Different Immigrant Cohorts

Since census data indicate that immigrants' English-language ability consistently improves with length of time in the United States, we explored the SSHS respondents' self-assessed ability to function in the four major life domains in relation to length of time in the U.S. Our analysis shows that, in immigrant enclaves such as Long Beach, Redwood City, and Sanger, many immigrants' functional ability continues to be constrained even after many years residing in the U.S.[2]

Moreover, although there are not enough native-born LEP adults in our sample for the finding to be statistically significant, it appears that those U.S.-born persons who end up being limited in English, also, have serious skills limitations. These findings indicate that the need for ESL and other skills development investments among LEP adults cannot be collapsed to the proposition of meeting the needs of newcomers. This consideration, of course, is a particularly important one among populations of Asian LEP adults (e.g. Hmong in our Fresno case study area, Cambodians in Long Beach) remain quite socially and linguistically isolated.

What is surprising when we look at self-assessed skills level for different immigrant cohorts, is that the long-term immigrants' assessment of their own ability to deal successfully with the demands of workplace, family life, community, and lifelong learning is lower than the more recently-arrived cohorts. This finding, while surprising, serves to emphasize the degree to which skills assessment is linked to context and expectations. One factor which is involved here is educational attainment which, as mentioned above is co-variant with immigrant cohort (with level of schooling inversely related to age and year of immigration). However, this finding tends to confirm the research which reveals that the multi-generation trajectory of immigrant assimilation is not necessarily one of smooth upward progress.

Another factor which may make self-assessed functional skills decrease with length of time in the U.S. is that the expectations of more long-term residents are increasing, as

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[2] The disproportionate omission of low-literate respondents from the census may tend to bias the census-profile of the immigrant population to incorrectly suggest that English-language acquisition proceeds more rapidly than it actually does (since well-educated immigrants who learn English rapidly or know it from their home country are overrepresented and poorly educated immigrants who don't are underrepresented).

are the life challenges they face.[3] Employment in the low-skill immigrant sectors of the economy entails heavy physical demands which can be met by young but not by older workers. At the same time, in a social context where the general expectation is at least a modest measure of upward career mobility over time, it is likely that older cohorts of immigrants are becoming increasingly disaffected with the constraints on their own career mobility and increasingly aware of the full panorama of English-language communication demands in the workplace.

Life-cycle factors may be involved in the differences among immigrant cohorts in terms of self-assessed competencies to function both in one's current circumstances and in an English-dominant environment.[4] The 10-19 year cohort assess their ability to deal with the current demands of family life and community life somewhat more positively than either the more recent arrivals or the group who have resided in the U.S. longest. However, their assessment of their ability to deal with an English-language environment falls in with the general pattern of a decline in self-perceived skills adequacy over time.

In general, the relation of self-assessed skill in different domains to length of time in the U.S. strongly suggests that the critical issues faced by immigrants in California relate not so much to short-term survival as to long-term success in prevailing in the face of the challenges they face. English-language skills seem not to be necessary so much to live in a community such as Long Beach, Redwood City, or Sanger as to live "well." This finding is cause for concern as it is consistent with analyses of immigrants' earning power which suggest that, in the current information-based economy, it will be difficult for immigrants to advance without greater "human capital" investments in building the skills they need to "get ahead" in a highly competitive society. It should be remembered that the problems faced by long-term "settlers" among the immigrant populations in the case study communities we surveyed include competition with both English-proficient native-born groups but, also, with more recently arrived cohorts of immigrants.

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[3] However, the research on Mexico-U.S. migration is discovering an increasing level of complexity among migration objectives. Cross-sectionally there are initial differences among migrants in coming to the U.S. and these objectives change over time. Thus, for example, the distinction between "settlers" and "sojourners", while well-founded, is now seen as part of constantly-shifting life strategies. This point is a central one in Rouse's work on Redwood City.

[4] It must be remembered that "current circumstances usually involves some degree of participation in transnational family and village networks.

In summary, these findings serve as a reminder that the ideal of social and economic equity entails more than survival-level skills. The strategic challenge, then, faced by California's adult education system includes the need to focus on responding to these distinct needs profiles. The first challenge is how to prepare more recent immigrants for sustained lifelong learning, the second one how to best respond to the needs of a long-term immigrant population whose assessment of their skills shows increasing dissatisfaction coupled with a decline in self-confidence (probably correlated as much with age as with life experience) that continued learning and skills development is feasible.

In this regard it is also useful to remember that the proxy "length of time in the U.S." used to capture LEP adults' experience is an imperfect one. In particular, as we see in the literature and the discussions of focus groups, the experience of Cambodians and Hmong and, presumably, each distinct immigrant population, is linked to many factors which determine how migration/immigration fit into the context of each individual's life While it is common to recognize the inter-generational dimensions of immigration and analyze assimilation in terms of first, second, and third generation experience, Rumbaut in referring to "1.5 generation" immigrants reminds us that the assimilation process is a continuous, if not constant, one. For Mexican immigrants, in particular, the ease of back-and-forth "shuttle" migration gives rise to a continuum of binational experiences.[5] In a concrete sense, the personal life history of an increasing number of California immigrants, primarily Mexicans, but to some extent other ethnic groups, is a transnational one of moving among several "spheres of influence."

Table Series 4-3 on the following page provides the quantitative data on how self-assessments of ability to function in different domains is related to length of residence in the United States.

[5] An important finding from our census research (Kissam, Nakamoto, and Herrera, 1994) was that the census question used for constructing immigrant cohorts, in attempting to combine two distinct elements of migrants' experience -- coming to the U.S. and staying in the U.S. became entirely ambiguous in the Spanish version of the census questionnaire. Mexican respondents, confronted with this question which contained two competing criteria usually said the date for "coming to stay in the U.S." was when one: a) got a steady job, b) asked one's wife to join them in the U.S.

Table Series 4-3:
Self-Assessed Skills in Relation to Length of Residence in the U.S.

Domain: Workplace Scale of Functional Ability 1----------->5 Low			High
Mean Ability in:	**0-9 years in US**	**10-19 years in US**	**20+ years in US**
Current Circumstances	3.30	3.26	3.12
English-only	1.54	1.64	1.29

Domain: Family Life Scale of Functional Ability 1----------->5 Low			High
Mean Ability in:	**0-9 years in US**	**10-19 years in US**	**20+ years in US**
Current Circumstances	3.30	3.46	3.34
English-only	1.61	1.46	1.33

Domain: Community Scale of Functional Ability 1----------->5 Low			High
Mean Ability in:	**0-9 years in US**	**10-19 years in US**	**20+ years in US**
Current Circumstances	2.69	2.93	2.70
English-only*	1.46	1.33	1.14

*p<.05

Domain: Lifelong Learning Scale of Functional Ability 1----------->5 Low			High
Mean Ability in:	**0-9 years in US**	**10-19 years in US**	**20+ years in US**
Current Circumstances	3.10	3.07	2.65
English-only	1.51	1.60	1.26

Immediate Student Prospects

We define "immediate" student prospects as SSHS respondents who said that they planned to enroll in an adult education course either "next year" or "in the next 2-3 years). This group deserves special attention because they can be considered to represent "market demand." This enrollment-oriented group is a fairly representative demographic cross-section of the LEP population, for example, in terms of age distribution, educational attainment, and occupation. The only observed differences between respondents who planned to enroll in the immediate future and those who didn't know or didn't plan ever to enroll in an adult education program are the following. Women were 13% more likely to have expressed a plan to enroll in the near future. Those who had already been in an adult education class were slightly more likely to plan to enroll in another class soon than others (35% of former enrollees vs. 28% of those never enrolled).

These findings suggest that the adult education system should continue to consider its role as a general purpose one, responding to the needs of a wide socioeconomic and demographic range of adult learners with somewhat different learning objectives.

The finding that LEP adults in a wide range of occupations are interested in adult education is interesting and relates, quite probably, to the fact that career advancement out of typical low-wage occupations dominated by LEP immigrants with little schooling usually requires moving into an entirely new occupation. Thus, it is not surprising to find many respondents interested in a major occupational change. The program planning implication is that, in this context, as well as the generic issue of lifelong learning, counseling and guidance support by the adult education system can play an important role in these adults' personal skill development decisions and planning.

The LEP adults who want to enroll in an adult education course in the near future rate themselves as having significantly higher skills level than do those who are unsure when they might want to enroll. **Table 4-4** below shows the difference between the two groups in terms of self-assessed skills in dealing with their current situation in different domains.

Table 4-4
Self-Assessed Skills:
Prospective and Uncertain Adult Education Students

	Prospective Students plan to attend-- "next year" or" in 2-3 years"	Uncertain Students -- "Don't know when" will attend
Skills Domain	Scale of Functional Ability 1----------->5 Low High	
Workplace	3.22	3.06
Family Life*	3.51	3.12
Community Life**	3.12	2.58
Lifelong Learning***	3.34	2.79

*p<.01; ** p<.01; *** p<.01

While the students who are planning to enroll in an adult education program in the foreseeable future have higher "baseline" skills (i.e., functioning in their current environment), the "net" value of English-language skills acquisition is only slightly greater for them than for the "don't know" category -- most markedly in connection with family life functioning and lifelong learning.

These data suggest that the decision to enroll in an adult education program requires some measure of self-confidence and entails some recognition that program participation provides a chance for overcoming the functional constraints which affect one's life. This has important implications for adult education system outreach, suggesting the utility of a carefully-crafted outreach message which says, not only what learning opportunities are available in the adult education system but which also stresses that "anyone can succeed" in an adult learning program.

Summary- Univariate Analyses of Sub-Groups

The differing profiles of SSHS respondents' self-assessed ability to function in dealing with twenty different skills areas in four major domains of life provides one indicator of the diversity of the LEP population. Ultimately, the service quality challenge faced by California adult education is to configure the service delivery system so that it can

recognize and respond both to prevailing patterns of service need and to the particular needs of individuals.

It is particularly important to recognize that individual profiles of need cohere. The cross-sectional analysis of similarities and differences between groups given here does not fully capture the way in which the many different stories of individual SSHS respondents shape their future plans and aspirations. The SSHS survey included opportunities for interviewers to elicit background detail on responses to many of the questions in the survey. We believe a full understanding of these individual stories is, also, important. The Aguirre International team plans, eventually, to conduct a more in-depth analysis of these individual "profiles" of educational needs. To the degree that the SSHS provides a prototype for local micro-planning efforts to develop more responsive services, we would urge service planners and researchers to also collect and analyze this type of narrative, reflective data as part of efforts to understand LEP adults' needs.

In the following section, we present a quantitative analysis of some of the interrelationships among the different constructs we used to describe SSHS respondents and their needs. This analysis should be seen as a preliminary one of primary value in framing subsequent hypotheses about how different dimensions of need are interrelated.

Multi-variate models of SSHS respondents' needs in four life domains

We formulated a "generic" stepwise multi-variate regression model which we used to examine the relationship of several independent variables to the following dependent "outcome" variables: a) LEP adults' "general foundation" skills in each domain (GEN-variables), their self-assessed ability to function in an English-only environment (ENG-variables), and the differences between their functional ability in their usual context and in the context of social interactions in English (NEWNET-variables). This final measure, NEWNET, reflects, we believe, the difficulty they would experience in transitioning from life in their current circumstances into an English language environment.[1]

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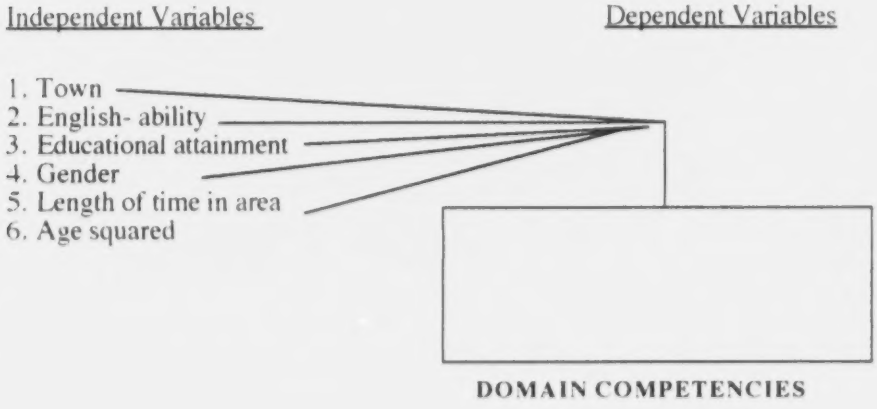
[1] The NEWNET variable was constructed by examining the absolute value of GEN-variables, of ENG-variables, and the relationship between these values and scoring each response in terms of implied difficulty in transitioning from one's current levels of functioning to full social mobility as implied by being able to function easily in an English-language environment. NEWNET scores ranged from 1-8 where the highest value implies the greatest difficulty, i.e. persons who reports they cannot function well at all in their

The Generic Model of LEP Adults' Functional Needs

The generic regression model, as currently formulated, relates six independent variables to the dependent variable in question. An important difference between the multi-variate model and the single-variable analyses of variation is that the multi-variate model includes the dummy variable TOWN to account for the influence community context exerts on perceived skills adequacy and the variable AGE[2] The model is the following:



1. Workplace -Gral Fdtn., Eng-Env., Transitional Diff.
2. Family -Gral. Fdtn., Eng-Env, Net. Transitional Diff
3. Community -- Gral Fdtn., Eng-Env, Transitional Diff.
4. Lifelong -- Gral. Fdtn, Eng-Env., Transitional Diff.

The measure, NEWNET, which we use for analyzing the relationship between respondents' functioning in their current social context and in an English language context, can be seen as reflecting transitional difficulty in achieving "full" functional agility in each of the major domains of life functioning. "Transitional difficulty" is a variable reflecting both the initial level of functioning at which each respondent would hypothetically start in building his or her English-language skills and what level of effort would hypothetically be required for them to "end up" functioning with ease in an English-language environment. Thus, in computing NEWNET scores, we assume the most agile or highest-level functioning person is one who is, essentially, bicultural, functioning with ease in all aspects of their current environment and with equal facility in an English-only environment. Conversely, we assume the least agile or lowest-functioning person is one who experiences

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current environment or in an English-language environment and the lowest value implies no functional constraints on functioning in one's current environment or in an English-language environment.

difficulties in coping with all facets of his or her current environment (in an immigrant enclave) and who feels he or she could not function at all in an English-language environment. In analyzing the effect each of the independent variables has on the skills under consideration, it is valuable to look both at the influence each dependent variable has, but also, at each successive step, as the variables are entered in the equation.

Workplace Skills

The model indicates that the town in which a respondent resides and their total education are the most powerful determinants of the adequacy of "baseline" skills for his or her current workplace. Gender and age are not related The full model outlined above

predicts a fair amount of variance in current skills level (R square=.240).[7] The fact that SSHS respondents' assessment of their current workplace skills is sensitive to community environment bolsters the argument for micro-planning to respond to the unique characteristics of the local labor market. Length of time living in the town is not significantly related to the adequacy of their workplace skills -- either in respondents' current circumstances or in an English-language workplace.

The model is somewhat more powerful in predicting ability to deal with workplace demands requiring English (R square=.327). While gender is not significantly related to "baseline" workplace skills, it is modestly but significantly related to English-language workplace skills, indicating that, even when controlling for other factors, men feel they have somewhat more workplace-context English-language facility than women. The model also shows that SSHS respondents' sense of their English-language workplace skills, in contrast to their self-assessed baseline skills, does not vary significantly from town to town.

We explored the determinants of the gap between current skills and "fully-functional" English-language workplace skills, the variable which we believe represents a potential student's difficulty in transitioning to a point in which they can function flexibly and agilely in an English-language workplace environment. The model is, again, modestly powerful (R square=.264). The other factor, in addition to fundamental English-language facility which is related to English-workplace skills is previous educational attainment. Level of schooling has almost an equal impact on presumed functioning in an English workplace.

The model also shows Redwood City to be significantly different from either Long Beach or Sanger in terms of the transitional difficulty in functioning in an English-language workplace; we believe this difference stems primarily from the extent to which Redwood City is a transnational enclave, leading SSHS respondents to more often report their current workplace functioning to be adequate whether or not they have English-language skills.[8]

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[7] For each model we evaluated the appropriateness of the data for the model looking at its distribution and the amount of variance the model explained. We don't report the linearity statistics for each model but the distributions were shown to be linear and normally distributed.

[8] The workplace NEWNET mean for Redwood City at 3.96 is significantly lower than Long Beach at 5.84 and Sanger at 5.85. We believe this reflects, in part, the strength of transnational village networks in Redwood City in valuing an individual's social capital.

Family Life

Self-assessed ability to cope with the demands of family life appears to be determined primarily by individual characteristics not in the regression model, although community context does appear to be significantly related to respondents' rating of their current ability to cope with the family life issues they face.[9]

Consequently, we focused on the determinants of SSHS respondents' assessment of their ability to cope with English-language demands related to family life and the NEWNET variable as an indicator of their overall need for skills development in this realm. The model is fairly strong in predicting respondents' functioning in areas of family life which require English (R square=.280) and weaker in predicting the transitional difficulty of acquiring the skills needed to function effectively in an English-language environment (R square=.194), probably as a result of many factors of personal circumstances entering into assessments of their current baseline functional ability in this particular realm.

An important finding is that respondents' assessment of their family life skills is <u>not</u> gender-related but <u>is</u> related to educational attainment, as well as to overall English ability. Respondents' assessment of the transitional difficulty they might experience in developing the English-language skills to function successfully in the domain of family life was related also to the town they resided in. In this domain, also, with Redwood City respondents have smaller gaps than those in the other two case study communities.

Community Life

As is the case in the family life domain, the model is more powerful in explaining ability to deal with the English-speaking demands of community life (R square=.302), than it is in predicting "baseline" skills (R square=.219) or the transitional difficulty of developing one's English-language skills in this domain (R square=.179). There are two very interesting findings from this modeling exercise.

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[9] R square for the model =.160. The most important negative finding is that assessment of baseline family functioning skills is not related to gender and relatively weakly related to schooling and English-language ability.

The first is that "baseline" skills for coping with community life are only weakly related to educational attainment and English language ability and not related at all to length of time living in the community.[10] Baseline assessment of ability to cope with community life was, however, significantly related to the community in which a respondent lived. Long Beach residents rated their baseline ability to participate in community life in the current context in which they lived significantly lower than did Sanger or Redwood City respondents.

The second interesting finding is that respondents' assessment of their ability to function in dealing with the English-language demands of community life is not strongly affected by community context. That is, the demands of dealing with the English-language skills required for community involvement were taxing in all three case study communities. Skills for English-language functioning appear to be significantly related to both "pure" English-language ability and educational attainment

Lifelong Learning

The modeling exercise showed that SSHS respondents' assessment of their skills in dealing with the demands of lifelong learning in English are strongly related to both overall English-language ability and to educational attainment. This is an unremarkable finding but it does serve to emphasize the importance of providing students whose educational experience is limited a solid foundation in "learning to learn" and an idea of the role that continuous learning plays in the lives of everyone living in an information-based economy and society. Education attainment exerts a more powerful influence on respondent's assessment of their baseline ability to learn than their ability to learn in English-language as would be expected. However, both factors are statistically significant.[11]

Overview -- Dynamics of Skills Adequacy

We interpret the dynamics of the regression modeling to be of theoretical interest as well as having practical implications. The model shows that a widely used standard

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[10] Neither are statistically significant but both are close. educational attainment is significant at $p<.055$. English-language at $p<.058$

[11] The Beta for educational attainment is .400 while the beta for English-language ability is .145.

measure of English-language ability (i.e., self-assessed rating of English-language proficiency) is positively but not perfectly correlated with LEP adults' practical skills functioning in an actual social context, both in their current environment and, prospectively, in an English-dominant environment. This suggests that LEP adults' skills development needs, while inevitably involving "pure" language-skills development, cannot be reduced to simply language learning. Instead, the skills development strategies must be integrally linked to learners' life circumstances, their experience with education, and experience in their current social environment.

This finding, in turn, implies that the hypothetical construct of "English-language proficiency" is not entirely satisfactory as an indicator of need for adult education services among LEP adults or as an indicator of successful educational outcomes. A preferable framework for understanding the skills development needs of LEP adults, would be an alternative set of measures which reflected actual functional ability in different domains of life functioning. To the extent that program design, curriculum development, and instructional methodology are (or might be) driven by the system used to measure outcomes in a performance-based system of accountability there is the distinct possibility that measures based purely on English ability might distort the system's ability to respond to students' actual learning needs.

In addition to their theoretical interest, the dynamics of the model's functioning have important implications for the adult education system's response to LEP adults' needs because it demonstrates that need for adult education services is context-sensitive. The finding that LEP adults' educational problems cannot be reduced to "lack of English" implies that their skills development needs cannot be reduced to "acquiring English". This finding should serve to heighten adult education planners', administrators', and instructors' sensitivity to the heterogeneity of their service population. It should also be understood to emphasize the importance of making good on adult education's commitment to be, in principle, genuinely responsive to each individual's unique needs.

In general, both previous schooling and overall English-language ability are related to SSHS respondents' functional ability in different domains of social interactions. However, community context appears to play an important role in modulating how respondents see their current functional ability and, to a lesser degree, their ability to function in an English-dominant environment.

The relationships between current self-assessed functional ability in each domain and in an English-language environment, as well as the absolute gap between current functioning and English-environment functioning all can be presumed to play an important role in determining the extent of service demand, variations in demand for services among different sub-populations of LEP adults, and the types of learning objectives adopted by each group of learners. At the same time, the sociological variables used in the modeling exercise do not exhaustively explain service demand, providing a reminder that individual and circumstances beyond English-language ability (or any of the other variables used in the regression model) play a large role in determining needs.

Our examination of differences of functional skills among different populations and the exploration of determinants of skills via multi-variate regression modeling is most important in undercutting the temptations of an "atomistic" model of LEP adults' educational needs which seeks to describe needs simply in terms of "literacy level", educational attainment, or English-language ability. In reality, "educational needs" must be seen as a more complex and dynamic construct, the product, so to speak, of previous experience, formal schooling, individual traits, social environment, and personal objectives and challenges. This recognition is crucial both in its implications for resource allocation and for curriculum design.

The generic regression model developed on the basis of SSHS respondents' assessment of their own skills in different functional domains -- in the context of their current life circumstances in an immigrant enclave, in an English-speaking environment, and the differences in self-assessed functioning in these distinct environments -- suggests that a fairly substantial amount of an individual's skills inventory (about 25-30%) can be explained in terms of very few variables but that the rest remains unexplained by these sociological constructs.

Surely, respondents' own assessment of their functional ability is not perfectly correlated with what an outsider's assessment of that functional ability might be. Our interviewers, for example, felt that some respondents were overly optimistic about their ability to engage in lifelong learning in their current circumstances (i.e., in Spanish) as they were not necessarily aware of the limited range of resources available to them nor of the full extent of learning demands placed on the "average" Californian. Nonetheless, there is, at the same time, validity to potential adult learners' self-assessment. At the core of it, the

analysis of different sub-groups' needs shows that all groups feel they already have some ability to cope in most (but not all areas). At the same time, each group appears to have a subtly different profile of self-assessed needs. Also, all groups have needs in some areas such as skills for coping with community life and for career advancement.

From this perspective, the role of adult learning programs is not so much to "teach", that is provide learners with skills they do not have at all but, rather, to "build skills", to assist learners in increasing their skills inventory and ability to deploy those skills in dealing with the situations they face. The differences in LEP adults' ability to cope with their current circumstances of life and their ability to cope with the demands of an English-dominant or English-only environment are a strong indication that the role of adult education may not be to convey new knowledge but, rather, to extend learning from a conceptual "home turf" to social environments which are new, unfamiliar, and demanding in terms of communication skills.

While our own analysis has focused on the pivotal role played by English-language proficiency in functioning within each domain of life, the degree to which functional competency is related to factors other than "pure" English-language ability reinforce the idea that "learning English" is only a metaphor for the much broader and complex process of LEP adults' social and economic integration into California and U.S. society. "Learning English" is, indeed, tautologically, at the core of limited English adults' educational needs but learning to <u>use</u> English in the full spectrum of social contexts is something quite different.

When adult education students speak glowingly of teachers who "understood" them, the sense we get from the current study is that students mean that the teacher had some sense of their life circumstances, their unique concerns, abilities, personal resources for self-development. But it is not so clear that, as a service delivery system, California adult education is driven by the need to respond to the totality of LEP adults' life circumstances. In quite practical terms, curriculum tends to be driven by the ready-made instructional materials available to an instructor, the content-related assumptions implicit in a particular instructional methodology (e.g. grammar-based ESL vs. "whole language" ESL), and fairly standardized assumptions as to what the objectives of ESL are, namely, to move students from one proficiency level to another.

In this context, it is, perhaps, not so surprising that we heard both from adult education students and instructors that the outcome of enrolling in an ESL class was seldom actually learning English. This does not mean that ESL class participation has not had important and positive impacts on their lives. More accurately it suggests that enrolling in a class is not the end of English-language development but just the beginning. If this is, indeed, the case, more attention might be given to how the classroom experience will relate specially to the rest of a student's English-language learning and in subsequent overall learning. Concurrently, more attention might be given to the idea of a "menu" of program outcomes rather than a single composite measure of positive program impact.[12]

While it is, indeed, inevitable that second-language acquisition be a process which takes place over the course of months and years, it is perhaps reasonable to expect that California adult education devote more attention to helping LEP adult education students understand what participation in an adult education program may or may not have done for them. A serious problem associated with adult education program participation is that learners who are not given a solid basis for understanding what they have "gotten" out of their experience may consider themselves educational "failures." As the system "menu" of adult learning options expands, it will become still more urgent to find ways to help adult learners appreciate how their personal skills have developed as a result of program participation.

Perhaps it is reasonable to expect that the ultimate goal of learning English be approached strategically. This approach would require explicit attention to how and where English is used and to the underlying problem that without sustained effort, practice, and attention to skills-building, achieving proficiency is unlikely. It is particularly interesting, that a good number of different instructors in different institutions talk about the problem of "plateauing" where an ESL student reaches a point where he or she finds it difficult to make more progress. From the perspective of the analyses in this chapter, this problem is not so surprising as the fundamental fact remains that English-language ability is and must be

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[12] While there has, in general, been reluctance among policymakers to accept service providers' argument that program impacts are real but "hard to measure", this does not inevitably imply the need for a one-dimensional measure of outcomes. It does, however, imply that service providers must be able to articulate and clearly demonstrate what the actual program outcomes might be, even if it may be difficult to fully predict in advance what they might be. This is why a "menu" of potential positive outcomes provides at least part of the solution to bridging the gap between standardized measures of accountability and the realities of service delivery.

linked to "the world", not isolated in a classroom. The implication of the analyses in this chapter, is that the challenge of getting learners out of the ESL classroom into the English-speaking world must be approached with a clear awareness, both sociologically and individually, of who they are, what they are doing in and with their lives, and what environment they are doing it in.

Quite simply, system response to multi-dimensional, complex adult learners must, itself, be multi-dimensional. As ESL instructors know from practical experience, the key issue, ultimately, become one of building LEP adults' success not in abstractly knowing English but in being able practically to use English. It is particularly important to recognize in the policy context that the usual summary referents of policy and legislative debate -- ESL ADA , ABE ADA , hours of instruction, numbers of students served, etc. -- are only imperfect constructs for describing the tip of the iceberg of "program intervention." In both the short and the long run, development of effective adult education policy and program designs will require increasing attention to how the service intervention is presumed to work and how different policy or planning options might improve efficacy of public investment in human capital.

The analysis of differences in different groups' needs in the preceding section of this chapter and the multi-variate modeling analysis provide, most importantly, a confirmation of the value of systematic planning based more on a focused and richly-textured sense of LEP adults' needs than on a externally-defined "curriculum" specifying what learners "should" know as prescribed by an outside observer or "expert."

Ultimately, the social construct of "educational needs" must reflect something of a negotiated agreement as to how individuals' perceptions of their needs and other stakeholders' perceptions of those needs intersect. Therefore, we argue, adult education system planning should be anchored both to a solid external framework for describing the general nature of social interactions needed in an information-based society and economy and to an internal framework -- profiles of individuals' particular skills development needs to carry out the strategies they are using for managing their lives.

Practically we argue that the best available analytic framework for specifying skills development objectives is the SCANS framework. Such an external framework can validly inventory what kinds of things LEP adults (or other adult learners) need to learn, while

specific learning objectives and contexts can (and must) be established on the basis of local needs assessments which look concretely and practically at the real-life challenges faced by each service population in the course of dealing with the demands of workplace, family life, community life, and the exigencies of continuous, lifelong, learning.

The implications of the gap between SSHS respondents' relative facility in functioning in their current environment and in an English-language environment is, of course, important for California society as a whole because it shows that LEP adults, while managing to survive in their current situation, have very constrained social or economic mobility, as indicated by the functional challenges they face if they attempt to move into portions of the California social universe where life is "English-only." Overcoming such constraints and bolstering agility to maneuver in the broadest possible range of social niches in a society where economic independence, personal opportunities, and power are based on access to information is the foundation of social equity should be a key goal of immigrant social policy.

Implications for Assessing the Special Needs of LEP Adults

In practice, assessing the educational needs of LEP adults currently consists primarily of assessing "English-language" ability -- in either a spoken or print context. While most assessments tend to distinguish between passive/receptive and active/generative language ability, most are anchored to a "standard" set of English-language utterances, text fragments, or print documents. While such assessment systems have some practical utility, the primary thrust of our examination of the overall needs of LEP adults in **Chapter 2** and the needs of sub-populations in this chapter is that functional ability to <u>use</u> English cannot be reduced to a generic measure of "English-language" ability.

The findings in the current study suggest that there is an urgent need to re-examine the issue of assessment with full recognition that language competency is intimately tied to the "social meaning" of the use of language (both one's native language and English) in real-world contexts. They also suggest the importance of careful consideration of the ways in which "spontaneous" acquisition" of English may relate to efforts to learn English in the context of a formal setting.

In the past two decades, there has been extensive research focusing on the sociocultural context of adult literacy development. Reder provides a particularly thorough review of the research in a recent paper on practice-engagement theory.[13] The many insights of this theoretical perspective on literacy center around language being firmly embedded into specific social and cultural contexts, much as we have found in the quantitative analysis of SSHS data. Reder stresses the fact that language and literacy are interactive, often involving some sort of collaborative activity and thus are sensitive to the mode of engagement. In a solid and concrete sense, language proficiency and literacy cannot be meaningfully considered independently as individual traits or abilities but only as parts of actual social interactions.

What we heard in both focus groups and in the SSHS survey is that LEP adults' reasons for embarking on a course of personal skills development by enrolling in an adult education program are intimately tied to who they are, what they do, how others interact with them, who they want to become and what they want to do. This leads us directly to the view that the "social meaning" of the sum total of a LEP adult's functional skills in a broad spectrum of familiar and unfamiliar social domains is, in fact, the proper issue to address in assessing LEP adults' needs. Adopting this approach has the advantage of directly linking "learning" to the task of building those competencies which will have a significant impact, i.e. "change" a learner's life.

While it is common to hear that the objective of a particular course providing educational services to LEP adults is to teach "survival English" or, perhaps, to teach "vocational English", we see few examples of actual LEP learners who have such uni-dimensional needs. The Hmong focus group discussants, for example, were eloquent in stating they did not want to learn about "apples and bananas" or "to count from one to eight." In actuality, the "typical" LEP adult seems to want to "go to school' as part of an overall life strategy in which adult education is one strand in a variety of problem-solving, adaptive strategies involving both complementary and competing activities..

If, in fact, the primary objective of assessment is to see where to "place" a student, then it must be recognized that the issue of placement really relates to where the student is

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[13] Stephen Reder, "Practice-Engagement Theory: A Sociocultural Approach to Literacy Across Languages and Cultures", in Ferdman, Weber, and Ramirez, **Literacy Across Languages and Cultures**, State University of New York Press, 1994.

in a three-dimensional matrix of life needs and how well an adult education program can provide the learner with the skills he or she needs to maneuver, to navigate the overlapping and partially conflicting demands of social life in a culture different than the one he or she grew up in. Thus, assessment must be holistic and, of necessity, take into consideration many different facets of a potential learner's life. An expanded concept of the purpose of assessment is intimately linked to the idea that the foundation of quality in an adult learning program is to shape a learning environment which facilitates individuals' progress, not to place a learner into a ready-made environment. Ultimately, the idea of shaping the learning environment to fit the LEP learner, then, leads to the idea of preparing learners to shape learning environments for themselves to facilitate their ongoing skills development.

Reder stresses the point that the "participation structure" of a person's life is crucial to accurately analyzing their "skills." In an ideal situation, adult education might let a learner "browse" through different micro-environments in the social universe and gradually acquire facility in navigating each. But the reality is that LEP adults are already functioning in a social geography of concentric circles of increasingly stressful and problematic social domains. This social geography extends outward from the "home turf" of the innermost circle of an immigrant enclave, their own extended family and village network, to a broader ethnic enclave, to a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual neighborhood of superimposed "turfs", and, at key times in life, into an environment dominated by "mainstream" institutions of American life -- the public schools, the offices of human service programs, hospitals, clinics, INS offices, etc.

The emphasis placed here on problem-solving as the fulcrum for assessing and understanding a LEP adult's learning needs comes directly from the observation that the actual life framework in which LEP adults function is not a neutral one and not one which often allows the luxury of browsing. "Universal" problems include: employment insecurity, low wages, declining earning power as one ages, tensions in interactions with other ethnic groups and ultimately relationships with one's own rapidly-assimilating children, difficulties in negotiating and sharing information with figures in asymmetric power relationships with them, such as teachers, principals, unemployment office staff, landlords, supervisors, managers, and health care professionals.

As we heard in focus groups, LEP adults need the agility to advance into better jobs, protect their rights, and establish genuine and meaningful relationships with those

who speak English only. Even in the sheltered lee of immigrant enclaves, analytic and communicative agility and versatility are needed to deal with a variety of demands in each domain. What we also heard in the focus groups is that there are very substantial opportunity costs taken on by LEP adults who decide to enroll in an adult education program as part of a strategy of personal development, even if educational services are free. Not surprisingly, they are preoccupied with knowing what their investment of time and effort will yield for them.

Current Assessment Techniques as a Component of a System of Performance-based Accountability

While student assessment experts regularly emphasize the basic point that assessment takes place in a specific functional context, usually distinguished as "diagnostic" assessment in contrast to assessment as a measure of program performance, these different functions are, in fact, closely related in practice and, as policymakers' interest in performance-based accountability grows, the linkage is strengthened.

One of the standard arguments put forward for investments in improved client assessment is that: a) performance-driven service delivery systems are more effective and more efficient than ones which are not, and b) that assessment drives service activities and overall system functioning. These arguments are valid ones. For this reason, choice of assessment system, whatever the nominal purposes, can either productively guide or distort system performance. Consequently, such choices are of great importance for both policy and planning. For example, a central debate in employment training policy has been the extent to which the performance measures used to drive JTPA system functioning tend to distort service planning and delivery.[14]

In the case of California's adult education system, the categorization of adult education services into ten discrete authorized instructional areas combined with reliance on CASAS scores for ongoing tracking of both ABE and ESL performance system-wide has, we believe, detracted from the system's ability to respond flexibly and creatively to LEP adults' learning needs.

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[14] Dennis Porter and Ed Kissam, "Funding for Performance and Innovation", Policy Option Paper #2, Adult Education Institute for Planning and Research, 1993. See also, Fred Best, Ed Kissam, and Jo Ann Intili, "Foothold on Employment", Pacific Management Research Associates, 1994.

The categorization of adult education services into the ten discrete areas serves initially as a program-centered reductionistic device, the antithesis of client-centered systems. Operationally, within the current adult education assessment system, the output from an assessment "black box" is a decision to place a prospective learner in a class in one of the 10 authorized areas, and if limited in English, at one of the traditional three ESL levels (beginning, intermediate, or advanced) or one of the seven levels delineated in the ESL Model Standards.

Under these circumstances, student assessment must, of necessity, be oriented primarily toward a determination of where he or she falls on a one-dimensional continuum. For the reasons described above, such assessment, even if technically reliable in some ideal standardized analytic framework, can be expected to have only moderate relevance to the individual's actual instructional needs. Instead of having a foundation for embarking on adult learning in the form of a genuinely individualized skills development plan, the prospective learner has been herded to one of several alternative "mass production" chutes through which adult learners are processed.

While LEP learners, once having been "placed" in their determined slot, may well encounter a concerned instructor committed to the notion of responding to their individual needs, the instructor, too, is operating within a framework of "processing" students from Level A to Level B, and so on. While an instructor, or an entire adult school, may, in fact, do "the right things" in responding to individual students, this is not an intrinsic part of system design.

The reductionistic process is accelerated further when a unidimensional numerical rating is deemed to convey meaningful information about a person's functional competencies in either the classroom (i.e., "learning to learn" skills) or the environment in which he or she lives (i.e., functional skills in workplace, family life, and community interactions).

While CASAS has developed a variety of assessment instruments, the use of pre-testing and post-testing in the ubiquitous survey of 321 providers leads, at best, to a distraction from serious assessment, at worst, to less than optimal curriculum development and instructional practice. Reder describes unidimensional assessment as developing from a "dipstick model" of literacy, implying that if the right "amount" of literacy were added

into an individual's head he or she would then be "all right", i.e., literate. With LEP learners, of course, the analogous outcome might be "English-proficient." From this perspective, then, the already-shaky use of CASAS pre-test data to "place" a learner in one or another learning environment is further compounded when comparison of pre-post test CASAS gains are used as a measure of the "value" added by the program intervention to a learner's stock of human capital and, collectively, to a population's social capital stock.

The recent development of a "crosswalk" relating CASAS competencies to SCANS competencies contributes further still to the fallacious notion that the ability to cope successfully in performing a wide range of tasks which are highly context-sensitive can be collapsed into a linear measurement which is reliably measured by test performance.

In summary, two organizationally attractive artifacts -- the taxonomy of ten authorized areas of instruction (and by implication, learning) and widespread use of a unidimensional scale to measure the value of educational service -- provide a seductive distraction from the valid policy objective of assuring program efficacy. This fallacy is, of course, not unique to California. National educational policy, in general, tends toward a sort of "field of dreams" fallacy -- "If we measure, it will improve!" with only secondary attention to how might one best help students "improve", that is, develop their current competencies to the degree to which it will prepare them to face the many demands of an information-based economy and society.

Current Assessment Techniques as Diagnostic Tools

While we present a negative assessment of current assessment approaches as a basis for course placement, the practical reality is that the current service delivery system is, in fact, built with building blocks which are labeled with course names and designators of level. Surely, even if use of unidimensional tests of some generalized English-language ability were to do little good, they might do no harm. Unfortunately, they may inadvertently serve to condition learners' and instructors' perceptions of what a student may be able to do as a result of program participation and what they are "worth."[15]

[15] This is clearest in the case of GED attainment, where passing the GED examination is seen by the student population as a "hoop" to jump through or a milestone on a upward course of progress. Either interpretation involves some exaggeration in terms of the test's relationship to the actual competencies needed to achieve specific personal objectives and compete in the labor market.

Translation of a matrix of abilities into a single assessment measure can be seen as a funnel which squeezes an entire landscape of information about an individual into a single ikon which is, subsequently, used to represent the individual and govern internal organizational processes as to how that individual is treated (i.e., how his or her "case" is managed). Essentially, the reductionistic approach to needs assessment serves to "lose" information about an individual's learning needs as he or she embarks on a course of learning. Eventually this process helps the learner to "lose" information about how his or her ability to function may have changed or might change in the future as a result of enrolling in an adult education program.

Appropriate Strategies for Assessing LEP Adults' Learning Needs and Progress in Meeting Those Needs

The information on LEP adults' educational needs presented in **Chapters 2-4**, in conjunction with a growing research literature on second-language learning and sociocultural factors affecting LEP adults' literacy and language use, provides a solid foundation for specifying the type of assessment strategy needed to improve the adult education system's responsiveness and students' success in pursuing their educational objectives.

The essential foundation for assessing LEP adults' needs must be some sort of process which constitutes a valid "environmental scan" of the potential learner's resources, tentative learning objectives, and contingencies which might affect outcomes. The scan must include exploration of "learning style" as part of considering programmatic options and information which is relevant to setting "benchmarks" for individualized learning efforts and reasonable achievements. The assessment strategy must provide for ongoing, recurrent assessment as an integral part of personal strategic planning and management of lifelong learning.

The task of developing instrumentation for a formalized version of such an assessment strategy might be complex, although a variety of multi-dimensional instruments is used in the context of career guidance programs to provide a framework for exploring options. Development of systematic strategies to structure California's adult education system to assure that each LEP student entering an adult education program has an

opportunity to engage in dialogue with an instructor to explore these issues and formulate an individual learning plan is well within the realm of possibility.

Most importantly, structured semi-formal skills assessment within the context of a student-instructor dialogue can serve to acknowledge the reality that functional competency is, essentially a dyadic relationship, that it involves collaboration, information-exchange, hypothesis-testing, as well as refinement of notions about oneself, exploration of issues of self-esteem and presentation of oneself. Such an exploration can also serve as a basis for probing the fragile constructs which typify new learners' ideas about "what they want out of a program of learning" (i.e., unpacking the metaphor of wanting to learn English) and as a foundation for exploring the idea that life-long learning is an almost inevitable part of life in today's society. Where assessment via formalized testing tends to serve as the basis for a ritualized and impersonal relationship between an adult learner and his or her instructor, exploratory dialogue-based assessment can serve as the basis for "checking in" periodically about "how it's going."

The structural framework for this approach to assessment is already well-established in the vocational rehabilitation context and in the context of multi-service programs which have adopted genuine case management approaches to responding to their clients' needs. The framework is often based on use of an inventory/checklist, quite similar to the interview protocols used by ethnographers, focus group leaders, and other social scientists in the research context. Typically, this sort of framework is helpful in reminding even an experienced interviewer to explore key dimensions of a person's current situation and desired objectives. This sort of "environmental scan" is particularly useful for fostering reflection among LEP adults who are faced with novel challenges in thinking about the particular demands made by contemporary society in terms of functioning in a broad spectrum of cultural, social, and technical contexts.

As in the paradigm case of diagnosis within the framework of medical care-giving, a key element in assessing LEP adults' learning needs is the feedback loop. Ideally, the framework can include a protocol for feedback designed to provide the learner with a way to conceptually organize new information about himself or herself. In cases where it seems desirable to emphasize collective interaction as an integral part of individual skills development instructor-student dialogue might be supplemented or replaced with group-based assessment and feedback.

This type of assessment system oriented toward "case management" and individualized intervention has, then, in addition to the initial assessment, periodic follow-up assessment. In the follow-up assessment, attention can, retrospectively, inventory new functional competencies acquired in the interim, problems encountered in the course of the intervention, and, joining this input to possible new modifications to the individual learning plan, formulate a new and modified plan.

Finally, this approach to assessment benefits from a management information system (either paper or computer-based) which serves as a matrix for storing a longitudinal series of assessment "observations" which, in actuality, are exercises in developing a negotiated construct as to how an individualized learning process is proceeding. While this type of assessment system is similar to well-established "portfolio assessment" strategies (and might incorporate typical portfolio work-products) it differs fundamentally in that it tends to emphasize the importance of a learner's subjective view of his or her skills development trajectory. At the same time, of course, it provides the learner valuable experience in developing solid self-assessments (based on careful reflection and some amount of external feedback).

To a certain extent, the assessment strategy sketched out above reflects the informal "best practices" used by skilled instructors interacting with their students. However, systemwide adoption would tend to give instructional staff "permission" or even encouragement to devote time to roles which are currently seen as being something of a luxury; a closely related advantage is that the process of ongoing periodic assessment tends to support instructors' involvement in "coaching" roles as distinguished from "stand and deliver" roles which do not distinguish among individuals. Some specific advantages of an assessment strategy based on recurring semi-structured dialogue with learners are that:

a) use of a structured process with a checklist makes the discussion process less idiosyncratic than unstructured opportunistic observations and feedback by an instructor,

b) maintenance of a record of dialogue/observations supplements introspection as a basis for reflective self-assessment on progress, i.e., the trajectory of one's learning,

c) dialogue serves as a means of facilitating learners' appreciation of the value and utility of both self-assessment and understanding, analyzing, and "digesting" others' observations,

d) use of a multi-dimensional checklist for assessment facilitates' learners' (and teachers') recognition that the assessment process is relevant to real life,

e) use of a multi-dimensional checklist serves to increase learners' ability to recognize areas in which they have had some success and form the basis for understanding about individual profiles of skills.

f) periodically recurrent reflection and self-assessment punctuate and emphasize the need to constantly fine-tune problem-solving strategies to optimize them.

This sort of ongoing periodic assessment process provides at least one model as to how adult education program staff might be productively involved in facilitating LEP learners' ongoing process of self-directed learning -- both during a period of participation in classroom-based instruction and as follow-up support after formal attendance in a class ends.

Configuring the multi-dimensional assessment framework to correspond to the SCANS schematism would, ideally, provide a basis for linking a "continuous" system of learner-based assessment, ultimately, to certification and demonstration of competencies, particularly if the checklist were structured to elicit concrete and explicit information on students' ability to confront typical "high-performance" challenges in the domains of workplace, family life, community life, and self-directed management of the process of lifelong learning.

The limitations of reductionistic frameworks for assessing LEP adults' learning needs and competencies is that, ultimately, the individual is "reduced" to a member of a class, usually a second-class group. The limitations of multi-dimensional assessment frameworks have, inevitably, to do with comparability. It is interesting, however, to note that when it comes to assessment of "higher-order" functioning, society is willing to allow much more flexibility in terms of the processes by which an individual's competencies are judged, as in the case of elite institutions of higher learning (e.g. University of California, Santa Cruz's narrative-based grading system). An important measure of equity for LEP adults may well be not only to work with them to develop world-class skills but, also, to allow the existence of multi-dimensional assessment frameworks to assist them in recognizing the value of the skills they have acquired.

Summary

California's LEP population in need of adult education services is extremely heterogeneous, not simply in terms of ethnicity, English-language ability, educational

attainment, and age, but, also, in terms of individual profiles of skills development needs and personal learning objectives.

Two parallel and linked initiatives are needed to "re-engineer" the current service delivery system to respond better to LEP adults' educational needs and, by so doing, to improve service effectiveness.

The first initiative will require rethinking curriculum, program designs, and instructional methodology to relate better to the multi-dimensional needs of LEP adults and to provide a broader range of learning options. This initiative will need to keep firmly in mind: a) the constantly-increasing skills demands of an information-based society, b) the constantly-increasing gap between life in immigrant enclaves and "mainstream" California society, c) the implications of the need for lifelong learning, and d) the implications of a re-conceptualized mission of fostering adult learning within an "anytime", "anyplace", "any pace" learning system.

The second initiative will require development of the sort of assessment strategy outlined above as a basis for effective "case management" of each individual's learning process in an environment where skills development is seen as a continuous, ongoing effort, not simply as enrollment in a course, time in a classroom, course completion or non-completion. A key design feature of such an assessment system will need to be its ability to assist each learner to develop the ability he or she needs to manage his or her own self-directed learning as part of the competencies to be taught in the domain of "learning to learn." As would be expected, in the context of current concerns regarding performance-based accountability, reliance on this sort of strategy for learner assessment would be hoped to drive system performance toward focusing on and successfully building a broader range of "necessary" skills than are currently incorporated into ABE and ESL.

Chapter 5

System Response to LEP Adults' Needs

Introduction/Overview

While the primary focus of the current study is on the adult education needs of LEP adults, an important related requirement posed in the study specifications was to examine how well California's adult education system is meeting LEP adults' needs. Given the limited scope of the study it was not feasible to conduct anything close to a full-fledged program evaluation to report meaningfully on program effectiveness, accountability, or outcomes. Thus, our primary focus has been to explore what LEP adults and adult school staff in our case study communities thought about how well the system was responding to their needs.[1] At the same time, we examined how macro-level system characteristics may affect system response at the local level to the needs of LEP adults in need of service.

We include in our analysis of system responsiveness, several different dimensions of system functioning, giving priority to two of the four broad areas identified in the California Strategic Plan for Adult Education: access to users and service quality/responsiveness.[2] The analysis of system access includes macro-level data, together with data from case study communities on outreach and learners' assessment of program accessibility. Our analysis of service quality/responsiveness includes measures of student satisfaction, learner-reported evidence of service outcomes, learners' assessment of program implementation, together with providers' assessment of their own successes and continuing problems.

Our research strategy for addressing the question of system responsiveness was to conduct focus groups with limited English Latinos enrolled in adult schools in each of our

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[1] We gathered information on program design, curriculum, scheduling, and instructional strategies from interviews with adult school directors and focus groups with staff but we did not observe classroom activities, systematically assess outcomes, or, otherwise, seek to generate a rating of how well these individual programs were doing.

[2] These are the strategic plan areas most closely linked to direct service to learners. The other two areas addressed in the 1989 strategic plan are: accountability and planning/coordination. These were beyond the scope of the current study although they are relevant as internal measures which, in part, determine overall system efficacy.

three case study communities, with Cambodians in Long Beach, and Hmong in Fresno. These focus groups sought the opinions of current students about their program experience, information on what they were learning, and their recommendations for program improvements. Concurrently, focus groups with out-of-school LEP adults in each of these ethnic communities sought information on the reasons why they were not enrolled, their impressions from previous experience in adult learning programs (if any), and information on the barriers (if any) which kept them from taking advantage of adult education learning opportunities in their community. We supplemented these data with information from interviews with key informants, including Asian and Latino community leaders, adult school directors, and other informed observers. We also conducted focus groups with instructional staff in each of the adult schools (Long Beach Adult School, Sequoia Adult School, and Sanger High School.[3]

In order to supplement the findings from our case study communities we reviewed and mapped CDE data on ESL ADA in relation to numbers of LEP adults needing services on a county-by-county basis (see **Map 5-1** below). As part of our assessment of CDE system responses to LEP adults' needs we also reviewed key documents such as the ESL Model Program Standards, materials developed with Section 353 funding and identified in California's adult education as part of capacity-building efforts to address the needs of LEP learners (i.e., from the Staff Development Institute, the UCLA ESL Assessment Project, and the Latino Adult Education Services project). Our assessment of the overall system response to LEP adult learners' needs has also benefited from informal but focused discussions with a wide range of CDE staff and consultants involved in program improvement, planning, and capacity-building efforts to better serve LEP populations.[4]

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[3] There was not substantial representation of Hmong in Sanger so we extended our community case study area for this region to include Southeast Fresno.

[4] We are particularly grateful to Ms. Joan Polster, Director of SDI for reviewing with us the activities of the ESL Institute. Other 353 Project Directors consulted include: Ms. Holda Dorsey and Mr. Dennis Porter. Ms. Pat Rickard and Ms. Linda Taylor were also extremely helpful in making CASAS materials available to us.

Findings

California's adult education system affords easy physical access to LEP adult learners in many communities.

The most powerful evidence of easy access to adult learning programs is the high proportion of persons in our random sample of neighborhoods with high concentrations of Spanish-speaking adults who had, in fact, participated in an adult education program. One of the most surprising findings of the SSHS was that, in the case study communities, more than half (52%) of the Spanish-speaking LEP adult population had already participated in some program of adult learning; another 16% had taken a second course. The overwhelming majority of course enrollments were in ESL. Almost all of the respondents (88%) reported that the first course they had taken was ESL; most (67%) of those who had taken another course reported that it, too, was ESL. The balance of course enrollments were described as "skills training" or "other."

We know from the county-level data on need for services and levels of ADA for ESL programs reported in **Chapter 1** that access to adult programs varies greatly from one county and community to another. Thus, it is not possible to generalize from our case studies to infer that on a statewide basis there is similar easy access.

School Siting Facilitates Access

Nonetheless, in the case study communities, adult education programs were prominently located in places where they were easily accessible.[5] In Redwood City, Sequoia Adult School's location on Middlefield Rd. places it at the heart of the Latino community who is its primary clientele. In Redwood City, "proximity" was especially commonly given as a reason for choosing the adult school as a place to learn. In Long Beach, the adult school has, similarly, located the main campus for ESL instruction at the corner of Cedar and 10th street, close to a very dense concentration of Latino immigrants while, simultaneously offering satellite classes targeted to the Cambodian community at the Buddhist temple and at six elementary schools in Latino or Cambodian neighborhoods.

[5] Our sampling for the SSHS entailed detailed mapping to the block group level, affording us a detailed overview of where Spanish-speaking LEPs had settled in the case study communities. Our information on

While fewer respondents in Long Beach said they would choose an adult learning program based on proximity, this is because more of the Long Beach respondents were interested in pursuing skills training at a community college. Sanger is much smaller than either Long Beach or Redwood City but it had recently begun to offer ESL classes at satellite locations in elementary schools.

As we reported in **Chapter 2**, the overwhelming majority of SSHS respondents were aware of local adult schools in the case study communities. Also, very few respondents reported problems with accessing ESL classes, with class size or with class scheduling. Although less than half of the SSHS respondents appeared to be aware of citizenship classes offered at adult schools, those who were had very few complaints about scheduling or class size. There did, however, appear to be some variations among communities. Slightly more respondents in Long Beach were dissatisfied with access to ESL classes (12%), the schedule (10%), or size of classes (22%). Access in Redwood City and Sanger was uniformly considered excellent, in part because these are smaller communities than Long Beach. Moreover, as can be seen in the mapping of residential patterns of LEP adults living in Long Beach, Redwood City, and Sanger, Long Beach has quite isolated pockets of LEP adults.

In Long Beach, both the Cambodian and Latino focus groups of adults who were not currently enrolled in adult school said that they would, ideally, like the adult school to provide transportation to and from night classes, not as much because of distance as because of worries about crime. Hmong focus group participants in Fresno had differing opinions about the accessibility of adult school classes: some thought they were easy to access but others were not aware of them.

Awareness of Adult Schools is High but not Universal

Our focus group discussions showed that adult schools are quite prominent institutions in the communities they serve. In Sanger, most students had heard about the adult school through friends or acquaintances who were already attending school. This networking among relatives and friends served to facilitate access, as most students carpooled to and from school. In Redwood City, the students in our focus group had

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settlement patterns of Cambodians in Long Beach, Hmong in Fresno and Vietnamese in Redwood City rests more on interviews with key informants but, also, suggests that adult schools were very well located.

heard about Sequoia Adult School from friends or relatives and some also said they knew of satellite classes at the elementary schools their children attended. In the focus group, only one student knew about Cañada College, the local community college, but a substantial minority of SSHS survey respondents knew about it (although it was considered much less accessible because of its location). In Long Beach, both Latino and Cambodian focus group participants also knew of adult school from friends, relatives and neighbors although several lived nearby and had seen the school's signs. Some of the Cambodian students had also heard about the adult school from their children's schools or from their children.

Overall awareness of the local adult school varied from community to community. In Long Beach, even the adults who were not in school were almost all aware of the adult school. Cambodian focus group participants, for example, were aware not only of classes at the main Cedar St. ESL site but, also, knew about classes in satellite elementary schools and at the Buddhist temple. In Redwood City, only four fairly recently-arrived residents among the group of twelve out-of-school adults, were not familiar with Sequoia Adult School. However, in Sanger, only three of the out-of-school adults had been aware that there were adult education classes in the high school before we met there for the focus group. One reason is that outreach efforts in Sanger are not well-designed. For example, the adult school hands out key chains as a promotion but the key chain logo is in English -- "You are #1 with us." It is not surprising this outreach method was ineffective in reaching limited English adults. Focus group respondents said an obvious and effective outreach method would be posters in taquerias and restaurants announcing classes.

Several focus group participants suggested that an important step for adult schools to take might be to improve outreach to make potential LEP students more aware of what kinds of learning opportunities adult schools offer and basic information about class enrollment (i.e., that classes are free; that immigration documents are not required in order to enroll). For example, participants in our out-of-school focus group in Sanger disagreed with each other about whether a *mica* (green card) was required to register for a class or not. In Redwood City, out-of-school focus group participants suggested that it would be useful for outreach efforts to explain to prospective students that there were classes at different levels for people with differing English-language ability.

Ease of Registration and Enrollment could be improved

In-school focus group participants generally reported that it had been easy to register for classes. Students in Redwood City were particularly adamant in saying that they felt that the school was welcoming and friendly. However, an important element in facilitating enrollment of LEP adults is the availability of bilingual personnel to help potential students with the enrollment process. While the adult schools in both Long Beach and Redwood City had such staff, the provisions for this assistance were somewhat informal. In Long Beach, a tremendously dedicated long-term Latino volunteer assisted potential students who spoke Spanish with inquiries about how and when to sign up for classes and general information while in Redwood City, the adult school janitor played a valuable role as an intermediary facilitating people's enrollment. Two Cambodian focus group participants said that their husbands had helped them register at the Long Beach School because they spoke English better than they did.

We were interested to see that, in Sanger, the adult school principal was responsible for enrollment and personally greeted and helped everyone enroll. However, although the principal speaks Spanish, we noticed that, apparently as a matter of principle, he uses English with most students. The study team's impression was that, while word-of-mouth was a positive and effective marketing vehicle for adult schools, the front-office "image" of the adult schools in the study communities was a more fragile component.

Access to classes was easy in Sanger where ESL and citizenship enrollment were not at cap when we visited. Focus group participants in Redwood City mentioned no access problems either. However, in Long Beach there were several complaints about enrollment. One focus group participant had lived in Long Beach for nine months and had tried to register in an ESL class as soon as he arrived in town but had needed to wait for three months to register. Another participant complained about people registering and taking up space for other potential students and then stopping coming to class. Others in the student focus group complained that they wanted to register for classes such as citizenship or computers but that the school didn't allow them to register unless they took ESL first.

In Long Beach and Redwood City, but not in Sanger, students were aware of placement tests to enroll students in the appropriate level of ESL and saw them as a

potential barrier to enrollment. There was some disagreement about whether such tests were a good idea or not. Several students in Long Beach thought they were a good idea but that they had been placed in the wrong level of ESL anyway. An middle-aged female student with no school experience thought she should not have been placed in the same classroom as a young man from Mexico with more than 12 years of schooling.

Some Hmong focus group participants who were attending adult school said that registration was easy, in part because they had been referred by GAIN. However, others complained. One respondent noted, "The reception area looked too serious. They did not look at us and seldom talked to us." Another was still more critical, describing the registration process in the following way,

"We are dumb so they treated us accordingly. They are too wise so they talked like they are wise. I am dumb so it seems like they were angry at me. I did not know what they say so whatever they said I did not understand."

There are significant personal and social constraints on accessing an adult learning program; these are only partially addressed by adult schools.

While there is easy physical access to adult schools in many communities, there remain a number of social factors which constrain participation in adult school programs. While some of these barriers cannot feasibly be overcome, others could be more effectively addressed. While LEP adults are aware that adult schools existm they are much less aware of what goes on in those schools, whether the school might be useful or appropriate for them, and what exactly is involved in becoming an adult education student, learning effectively in class, or benefiting from their new skills.

Two well-known barriers to adult school enrollment -- lack of transportation and lack of child care -- constrain potential LEP students' participation. As noted above, transportation was considered a significant problem in Long Beach (due to concerns about safety at night) but not in Sanger or Redwood City. Child care was a problem, particularly for women, in all the communities. Two of the three adult schools in the case study communities --Redwood City and Long Beach -- were addressing this issue. The other, Sanger, was not. In Redwood City, an effective approach was that the adult school provided space at school for child care; parents took turns watching the children. In Long Beach, there is a new program initiative providing ESL and ABE instruction on-site as part

of a family-centered program which serves both children and their mothers. This is a very innovative and promising initiative but it is, of course, by no means adequate to meet the full extent of need.

A few Latina participants mentioned that their husbands did not encourage them to come to adult school. Focus group participants, in general, agreed that working long hours was a barrier to adult school participation and that people, tired from work, would sometimes or often prefer to watch TV than to do anything to "get ahead". Focus group participants did not feel these were constraints which it was appropriate for the adult education system to address. For example, focus group participants said that to go to adult school people needed "to have a set mind", "make an effort", "be responsible", "make sacrifices."

Lack of self-confidence clearly poses another important barrier to school enrollment and the adult school system appears to have had mixed success in addressing it. On the one hand, word-of-mouth information on schools provided by satisfied students is one means of assuring uncertain learners that they might succeed in an adult school class. However, our focus groups with current students and with out-of-school LEP adults indicate that self-confidence and related social factors are still a big problem.

In-school focus group participants were engaged in a sentence completion exercise to reflect on what the psychological barriers affecting their enrolling in adult school might have been. We asked respondents to complete the following sentences. "Before I came to school, I thought school was....": "Before I came to school, I thought students were...", "Before I came to school, I thought students were....." The comments elicited show a clustering of concerns relating to self-confidence in a setting which is seen as an intensely social one. Interestingly, in the Latino focus groups the exercise elicited both positive and negative preconceptions but, in the Cambodian focus group in Long Beach, there were only positive preconceptions.

Re School and Teachers

"I was afraid of teachers": "I thought it was going to be difficult to communicate with teachers but [it turns out] all of them are great": "I was embarrassed": "I thought it was difficult", "I thought school was for children"

Re Adult School Students

"I thought students were bad"; "I thought other students would laugh at me"; "I thought adult school students lacked respect for each other"; "I thought students were not friendly, that they didn't like to communicate"; I was embarrassed to come, I thought others would be much more advanced than me"; "I thought they'd laugh at me because I don't know how to read or write."

These findings are not really surprising but they do serve to highlight the extent to which educational institutions and the educational process are seen by low-education adults as something of a double-edged sword -- an important opportunity to "get ahead", "to change one's life", but also an opportunity to fail, to be recognized as unable to learn. This strongly suggests the value of an early pre-enrollment orientation on "learning to learn" or even pro-social adult school public service announcements on reasons for and ways to pursue adult learning. Moreover, some LEP adults with little schooling see the process of failure as almost deterministic. For example, a Sanger focus group participant said, "We get to a certain level of English-speaking ability and we get stuck there because of our lack of education in Mexico."

In general, the adult education system has not recognized outreach as a vehicle for addressing LEP adults' concerns about the prospects of engaging in adult learning. While the basic information that there is an "adult school" that offers classes is usually seen as the central fact of outreach, a more useful strategy to respond to the personal barriers which constrain LEP adults' enrollment in courses would be to design outreach to communicate a better sense of what kinds of learning opportunities are available, what goes on in an adult education class, and that it is feasible to be a successful adult learner. Certainly, the ubiquitous use of mass mailing of adult school schedules in English is an evidently ineffective approach to effective outreach in LEP communities.

Spanish-speaking survey respondents and most, but not all, focus group participants reported very positively on their experience in adult education programs.

Latino survey respondents and most focus group participants had very positive views of their adult school experience. However, the Hmong focus groups were very

critical of the Fresno Adult School. We discuss first the positive reports and then the problems reported by the Hmong in Fresno. In general, we take these reports, together with the differences between groups in terms of experience, to highlight the importance of adult education service providers finding a way to respond to the specific concerns of the local service population and communicate to LEP communities that they are, in fact, seeking to be as responsive as possible.

The overwhelming majority of SSHS respondents who had enrolled in an adult learning program reported positively on their experience. **Table 5-1** below shows respondents' rating of their program experience overall and by community. In discussing their positive experiences, respondents stressed primarily the adult education instructors' responsiveness and patience. Similar themes predominated in the focus groups. The fact that reports of negative experiences are as low as 5% among Latinos in all the case study communities provides evidence of successful service quality management.

Table 5-1
Rating of Experience
in Adult Education Program

Rating of Program Experience	Long Beach (N=43)	Redwood City (N=52)	Sanger (N=42)	Overall (N=135)
"Excellent" or "fine"	68%	85%	79%	77%
"More or less" or "fairly" good	27%	10%	17%	18%
"Not very good"	5%	5%	5%	5%

** Information on rating is missing for 2 cases -- 1% of those who reported having attended a formal learning program.*

Focus group discussions further amplified on the "adult education experience" of many learners by acknowledging the important role played by adult education programs as a locus for social contact for immigrant learners who often feel isolated and lonely, in both urban and rural areas. One young woman who was surveyed jokingly told an interviewer, "People just go there to find boyfriends; I'm going to keep an eye on my husband." Conversely, some men didn't want their wives to go to class because of the social atmosphere. Certainly, there are also other social reasons for attending adult school. Two married women in the Long Beach student focus group stressed how it was good to be away from children and out of the house; one talked of class as "like therapy."

Focus group discussions also highlighted the important role adult education programs can play in increasing learners' self-esteem, strengthening their resolve to "make something of themselves", and fostering peer group support. Survey field staff noted that the adult education program's role in this regard is particularly important for women from rural areas of Mexico who had not been raised to think of themselves as independent, self-reliant persons. For them, entering the labor market, sometimes as a result of separating from their husband, represented a personal crisis which the adult education program was able, in part, to ameliorate.

These are important functions and are, ultimately, part of what needs to be done to build a foundation for lifelong learning. Learners' satisfaction with their program should not, however, be taken as the only measure of program quality. Despite the high levels of client satisfaction, few adult learners were able to provide a definitive answer to our question about actual skills development outcomes. "What did the program help you do that you couldn't do before?" Those who did detail what they had gotten out of adult school enrollment included both direct, tangible results, and indirect: speaking English better, being able to help one's children better in school, gaining self-confidence, communicating better with English-speaking children.

Service Quality Problems as seen by adult school students

The complaints put forward by dissatisfied learners identify a variety of service quality problems which, however, tended to be highly individual in nature, reflecting a perception that the program design, the instructor, or the entire classroom experience was not well attuned to the individual needs of a learner. Some blamed themselves for an unsatisfactory experience. One older Latina, for example, told an interviewer, "*Ya mi cabeza no sirve para aprender*" ("My head's no good for learning any more.").

Field interviewers also observed that respondents with less education had problems with instructional practices such as grammar-based ESL (since they couldn't understand the terms used by instructors) even when other better-educated learners in the same class considered the instruction to be effective. Perhaps one of the most telling criticisms of the grammar-based approach in this same program was a respondent's answer to our

interviewer's question, "What did you learn to do...[in an ESL class]" -- *"Me enseñaron unas palabras sueltas"* ("They taught me a few loose[random] words").

Perhaps the most common recurring complaint was about being placed in the "wrong level" of class. One issue mentioned in the Redwood City focus group was that placement should not be based only on English-language proficiency but should take into account the amount of schooling students had had. However, other students thought they had been well-placed.

Another uncommon, but serious, complaint related to rude or insensitive treatment by teachers. Only focus group respondents (about 5%) made this complaint but they were vehement about it and clearly were angry and hurt by their perceived ill-treatment.

Students were also unhappy with idiosyncratic teaching methods which were not linked to the realities of their life. A Long Beach focus group participant said, "This year's teachers are good. But in years past they were not as good. I used to have a teacher who would just sing Beatles songs. I just couldn't understand anything. I want to learn practical English. If a police officer stops me, what am I going to do? Sing him a Beatles song?"

There was disagreement among Latino students about whether it was desirable for teachers to explain lessons in Spanish and English or only in English. There were also complaints about ESL instructors who were not native speakers of English.

Our two Hmong focus groups represent something of an outlier in terms of LEP groups' experience with adult education -- because reported problems relate to almost all aspects of adult school functioning and because these reports seem to reflect serious concerns. Perhaps the most disturbing reports from Hmong focus group participants relate to adult school curriculum. Several respondents complained that instruction was ineffective and unrelated to their concerns, needs, and learning objectives. Comments on this theme include the following:

"We seem to be learning the same old things over and over again. For example, basic things such as 'apple' and 'banana'. The teachers are not so willing to explain things to us because they say we haven't learned it yet."

"We began to count from one to eight. After recess, we again learn to count from one to eight. I then began to question myself, 'what is it that these students have been here for so long and they are still trying to count from one to eight'? I asked them and they told me that when they first came to the school they knew a little English but now that they have been to the school for 4-5 years, they speak less English than before. This frightened me. They told me they have already had schooling in Thailand. So I figured if that was going to be my fate, I would be better off taking care of my family."

Even Hmong adult school students who had somewhat positive views of the adult education program had related complaints. Two comments:

"Going to school has changed my life a lot because it's like a light that allows me to see farther. But I still feel the teaching here is not enough because they don't fulfill what I expected. I wish they will teach us more meaningful things. We do appreciate what they teach us here however the time limit they set for us is only two years which is not enough...We feel like we are just here to stretch our backs because what they teach us here has little importance in the real world."

"Some good things are that by coming to school we expand our vision. We feel the urge to learn. However, other than giving us a sense of 'coming to school', the curriculum here does little to motivate us. "

"We feel we can never reach what we hope to reach if we attend this school."

We did not have an opportunity to observe classroom instruction in Fresno or talk with Fresno Adult School instructors about their perceptions of what they are doing in class so we do not know to what degree these perceptions reflect actual program shortcomings or idiosyncratic perceptions. Irrespective of their validity vis-a-vis the "typical" classroom experience in Fresno, the complaints articulated here are not unfamiliar ones. We believe they provide an important warning about the pitfalls of curriculum based on "generic" concepts of learning objectives which typify some "survival English" ESL classes. The Hmong adult school students who complain of their experience seem to have articulated well a common desire for a plan for individual learning which allows an adult learner to achieve his or her specific personal skills development objectives.

Hmong focus group participants also complained about the way teachers approached instruction, as well as how they were treated. One respondent raised issues about multi-lingual ESL instruction in the course of our discussion of different "learning styles", two others raised issues about instructors' treatment of students.

"Instructors must be able to manipulate instructions so that all people who learn in different ways can benefit. ..The Spanish-speaking teacher was able to teach the Spanish-speaking student. However, if a Hmong-speaking teacher were to teach us, we feel we would be able to learn to read and write, but we may not learn to speak. It is okay to have a Spanish-speaking teacher as long as s/he gives instruction only in English."

"We have the same problems that the Spanish-speaking students but we are left "to stare at the ceiling' because the teacher did not explain the problems in English so that we may benefit from the explanation as the Spanish-speaking students do."

"The teacher was mean. Once two students were late and she would not let them into the classroom. She shut the door and told them to go home. This made me feel that the students were not late on purpose and that she had no right to turn them away. She was hired by the government, she should have been more nice. I believed the late students were from the GAIN program so she treated them badly."

Hmong focus group participants' complaints about the quality of adult education service show how crucial it is for adult education programs to demonstrate responsiveness. Ironically, part of Hmong discusssants' bitterness seems to be related to their high expectations of adult education and the disparity between their expectations and the actualities of their classroom experience. Their final assessment was that more support for adult education programs was good but that schools still "need fixing."

Focus Group Participants' Recommendations for Program Improvement

There was a wide range of recommendations for improvements. While students' were generally very happy with the instruction they were receiving, these recommendations represent a useful "laundry list" of possible issues to consider, some of which can feasibly be addressed, some of which may be beyond the realm of possibility.

In Long Beach, the Latino student focus group recommendations included the following: a) provide child care, b) offer ESL 4 days a week not just two, c) offer classes combining ESL/citizenship, d) offer concurrent ESL/skills training instruction, e) assure ESL teachers are native speakers of English, f) offer self-esteem classes, g) create study groups, h) have more teachers who understand learners' needs.

The Long Beach Cambodian student focus groups recommended: a) child care, b) take-home school supplies such as books, videotapes and cassette tapes, c) Cambodian translators in ESL classes to help students understand teachers, d) smaller class size -- e.g. 10 students, e) a lunch program, f) bus transportation to and from class.

In Sanger, students were very happy with their classes but there were also a few recommendations: a) set up an English language laboratory where students could spend some time practicing spoken English, b) provide information on how to get a GED, c) offer classes on how to use a computer, and d) explain how to go to college.

In Redwood City, suggestions included: a) Spanish literacy classes, b) classes in Spanish to learn more about our heritage, c) classes more days a week.

In Fresno, positive suggestions from Hmong focus group participants included: a) encouragement and permission to go on to higher education, b) more flexible schedules, c) more choices of subjects, d) less delay between taking a placement test and getting results, e) three months of school, immediately followed by job training, f) career guidance -- "The school should point us in the right direction and motivate us to go into a career."

Service Limitations as Seen by Instructional Staff

In each of the focus groups, instructors noted that the current adult education system's ability to respond to the needs of some sub-populations of LEP adult learners was not as good as they would like it to be. In particular, the adult education system's ability to provide support services to learners with multiple needs was seen as being quite limited; thus, for example, several instructors thought their ability to work with women with abusive husbands or single AFDC mothers was too limited. As noted above, in Redwood City, the ability to respond to handicapped students was considered a problem. In general, it was felt that very low-literate students were harder to serve and more likely to drop out.

California's decentralized adult education system has been responsive to LEP adults' needs at the local level but the quality of response and level of innovation probably varies greatly from community to community.

Focus groups with instructors at the adult schools in our case study communities showed a solid understanding of their students and revealed a broad array of thoughtful strategies for responding to the needs of LEP students. While we cannot generalize from the case study communities to characterize statewide system responsiveness, some of what we observed relates directly to system responsiveness and provide a basis for structuring

further inquiries toward definitively assessing system responsiveness and how it might be improved.

Absolute Program Size Affects Local Programs' Ability to Respond

The ADA cap of each school district, as well as local leadership, clearly plays an important role in determining the nature and quality of local adult school response to LEP adults. Long Beach Adult School, with a cap of 1,435 ADA, was the only one of the three medium-sized districts in the study which had an adequate funding base to sustain a structured and systematic approach to program planning, implementation, and service quality improvement. At its level of slightly under 200 ADA, Sequoia Adult School was only able to sustain somewhat more modest program initiatives. Finally, at Sanger High School's adult program, the smallest provider with a cap of 112 ADA, service was pretty much "business as usual" night school for adults. The program director was, however, moving toward a major acquisition of hardware and software to introduce computer-based learning options into the program.

While the instructors at each of the adult schools felt that the adult program director was personally and practically supportive of their efforts, only in Long Beach was it possible for the adult school program to support a cadre of full-time supervisorial staff who could engage in systematic program planning, design and implement new multi-stranded service initiatives, engage in local staff development support, and maintain systematic efforts to manage and continuously improve quality control. In contrast, in Redwood City, while there was support for staff development this was seen less as a program responsibility than as part of individual professionalism. In Sanger, where adult school instruction was provided by part-time adult education instructors who worked full-time in the regular K-12 system, staff development was entirely an individual matter, although two of the three instructors we talked with had, despite the demands of working two jobs, gone to CABE or SDI training.

Adequacy of Funding for Services affects local schools' ability to respond to LEP adults

The level of ADA allocated to the adult schools in the three case study communities in relation to universe of need and demand for service appeared to affect the local system's

ability to respond to LEP adults' needs. Need and demand for services among LEP adults were much higher in Long Beach and Redwood City (where both programs were operating well over cap) than in Sanger where the program was slightly under-enrolled at the time of our visit. In Redwood City, for example, instructors estimated that there was a waiting list of 200-300 students (perhaps 20% of the school's slot capacity).

Although Long Beach Adult School is the largest, most proactive, and innovative of the three schools, it was clearly experiencing capacity problems, as evidenced by complaints from prospective students who had to wait to get into class and slightly less student enthusiasm than in the other case study communities. Instructors reported that they sometimes had as many as 40 students in class. In contrast, Sanger, where class size was smallest, there appeared to be the highest level of student satisfaction, although instruction was structured in a highly traditional sequence of Pre-Beginning, Beginning, and Advanced ESL.

In discussing problem-solving to respond to recognized instructional needs, instructors in the focus groups would acknowledge often that some issues should be addressed but that there were no resources to respond. In Redwood City, for example, instructors felt that there was a need to better respond to students with learning disabilities but observed that, of course, there was not adequate funding to refer students for in-depth assessment even when a student had an apparent neurological problem (e.g. inability to write on a straight line). We also discussed, with each of the provider groups, the potential desirability of counseling and guidance personnel to respond to problems of students dropping out of classes, difficulties in progressing to the next level of class, or plateauing in Advanced ESL. In each of the groups, it was felt this might be a valuable function of the adult program but that funding did not permit anything more than informal counseling provided by individual teachers.

The adult education programs in each of the case study communities were responding to issues of access by providing classes at satellite locations, usually elementary schools but, in Long Beach, at locations such as the Buddhist Temple. In Long Beach, however, funding constraints required creative problem-solving in the form of maintaining adult programs at satellite elementary school locations with a combination of distance learning (loaning out videocassettes) with face-to-face instruction.

Long Beach Adult School and Sequoia Adult School had applied for 5% funding approval for activities involving innovative approaches to instructing LEP students (both using CROSSROADS CAFE on videocassette). However, use of this funding mechanism is only feasible for adult schools with a relatively high cap because, at lower levels of ADA, the 5% limit on earmarked funding does not permit meaningful investments in project design and management.

Types of Innovations Vary Greatly from Community to Community

In focus groups with instructors and discussions with adult program directors we heard of a wide range of innovative and promising approaches to instruction. In two of the communities (Redwood City and Sanger), as in the system overall, the prevailing model was one of instructor-initiated innovation. In Long Beach, organizational problem-solving was guided systematically by program leadership (the director and a cadre of full-time experienced supervisory staff). Instructional practices we heard of, from instructors, administrators, (or from students), which seemed to represent a special, or innovative response to students' needs in the local communities in this study included:

- Field trips to broaden rural students' horizons (e.g. to Monterey Aquarium, Sacramento)
- A library tour with instruction on how to check out a book (and actually getting a library card)
- An instructor taking students to the local IRS for help in filling out their income tax form (as *notarios* charge a lot).
- Plans to loan CROSSROADS CAFE videos for home use (a practice with particular promise for live-in maids in affluent homes who have little time off)
- Provision of space for cooperative child care to facilitate women's class attendance
- Classroom activities designed to improve cross-cultural communications among students (e.g. student accounts of their own histories of coming to America, older Cambodian women learning some Spanish from younger Latinos)
- Creation of an International Students' Club to do talks to elementary school classes
- Creation of a daytime family-based adult learning class involving mothers and their children
- Use of mentoring for staff development
- Classroom visits, by community leaders, police department, insurance people
- A concurrent math/ESL program, consisting of an hour of individualized bilingual instruction in math following a regular ESL classes

Focus group discussions made it clear that there is a high level of informal information-sharing and mutual support among instructors. Instructors' discussions were characterized by a clear enjoyment of collaborative efforts. In Sanger, for example, the instructors said simply that when a new instructor was hired everyone would pitch in to help the new employee get used to the adult education program. However, funding seldom permits structured opportunities for peer-group support. Long Beach adult school was unique in that the Assistant Principal of the adult school regularly reviewed instructors' lesson plans and insisted on a structured approach to expanding classroom-based skills practice outside the classroom into "real-world" domains of functioning.

Under current conditions, it appears that instructional innovation will be sporadic and somewhat chaotic -- like popcorn popping. The over-arching sense we got from discussions with adult school program staff was of dedicated, interested, and concerned teachers working under a constant sense of pressure due to lack of time and escalating demand for services. When information was shared or when instructors talked over how things were going, the sense we had was that it was generally on a "catch as catch can" basis.

Aside from its macro-level effects, the current funding system based on student contact hours appears to subtly communicate the message that the only time on task is "stand up" time in the classroom. While, on the one hand, instructors recognize the value of one-on-one attention to students, of planning, of curriculum development and alignment efforts, these are all "extras." While there is a strong sense of professionalism among adult school staff and a willingness to "go the extra mile," there is also a sense of exhaustion and a realization that instructors must draw boundaries or they will soon have no personal lives.

Adult schools are positive about inter-agency collaboration and volunteerism but have not yet fully recognized the potential of such efforts as part of strategies to improve service quality and capacity for LEP adults.

Each of the local adult schools was part of a community-wide network of service providers with partially overlapping responsibilities for different types of services to students. The closest, and most obvious, area of collaboration was via linkages with vocational skills training providers such as community colleges and employment training programs. In Long Beach, the adult school is involved in a targeted effort with CSU-Long

Beach to facilitate Cambodians' access to higher education. However, adult education funding does not support case management activities and service referrals are on an individual basis usually

Community-based programs were involved in providing adult learning services to LEP adults in all of our case study communities. There is good coordination but little program integration For example, in the Redwood City/Fair Oaks area, a volunteer-based program, Project Read is providing literacy tutoring to LEP adults, with a special emphasis on some sub-populations who may not be easily served by the adult school, e.g. "at risk" youth, isolated/shut in populations, but there are no jointly-operated programs. We were surprised to hear little about community-based programs from our random sample of Spanish-speaking respondents in Long Beach, Redwood City or Sanger.

We heard of only sporadic efforts to recruit, train, and use volunteers to expand adult schools' ability to either deliver services which were not currently affordable (e.g. child care, counseling and guidance, transportation) or to expand system capacity to provide services which were already in place (e.g. classroom instruction, curriculum development, clerical support). We also heard of no systematic efforts to develop mechanisms of peer support for students (although such support was always encouraged). We are aware that there are many potential barriers (e.g. union opposition, insurance liability concerns) standing in the way of such efforts but, nonetheless, find it surprising to hear so little attention to this area where pro-active and innovative efforts might lead to dramatic improvements in the system's ability to respond to demand which far outstrips service delivery capacity and funding resources.

It is interesting that, at a point where there is increasing emphasis on inter-agency collaboration to "do more with less", there remain tensions even within the K-12 education system which make it a challenge to develop and implement program designs which engage both adults and children such as family-based multi-service models such as Head Start, Even Start, and Healthy Start. In Long Beach, the adult school staff (and community observers) felt there inter-agency collaboration was an area where the school excelled but working out collaborative arrangements had required a proactive effort. In Sanger, although there was interest in introducing adult school students to computer use, the high school administration had not allowed the adult school access to its computer lab due to concerns about increased maintenance costs if adult students used the equipment.

In listening to discussions of inter-agency coordination via existing information and referral networks, we observed that there appears to be little evidence of duplication or inefficiency. In the context of a nationwide move toward "one stop" service delivery schemes for responding to adult learning needs, it is unfortunate that there is no evidence of additional resources being committed for development of collaborative efforts to provide integrated multi-service programs. In the case of Long Beach, we heard great interest in and saw evidence of pro-active experimentation with programs providing multiple services. But the simple fact is that no funding is available to make such programs available to all who might benefit from them. Across the entire spectrum of human service agencies, program design decisions continue to be based primarily on traditionally-defined program missions, systems of accountability, and funding. Without a more pro-active cross-agency leadership at the federal, state, and county level, the hope for developing truly integrated multi-service program designs throughout the state is doomed, if not to failure, at least mediocrity.

System resources available for responding to LEP adults' learning needs vary greatly from one area to another but LEP adults' access is probably on a par with that of other service groups.

Using the analyses of statewide distribution of LEP adult populations in need of adult education services and CDE data on ESL ADA on a county-by-county basis we examined the extent to which California's adult education system is likely to afford equal access to LEP adult learners in different areas.* This analysis shows that the ratio of system capacity for English-language instruction (as measured by ESL ADA) varies greatly in relation to the universe of need for services to LEP adults showing that there are "gaps" in the statewide service delivery system where access to services is likely to be extremely difficult. **Map 5-1** below shows variations in system capacity expressed in units of ADA/LEP universe of need.

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* We do not mean to imply that ESL is the only indicator of adult education system response to LEP adults' educational needs. It is simply the only available proxy for gauging resources allocated to serving LEP adults.

Map 5-1:
Ratio of ESL ADA Cap to Size of LEP Adult Population Needing Services

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Map 5-1 suggests that the several distinct factors are involved in allocating adequate resources to meet LEP adults' needs. Perhaps the most striking finding is that even in an urban county such as Los Angeles or a rural county such as Fresno where there is a widespread recognition of LEP adults' needs, available resources are not adequate to respond. On the other hand, when we compare the ratio of ESL ADA to LEP need to the overall ratio of total ADA to total adult basic education need, counties such as Imperial and Riverside have a better ratio of ESL ADA to LEP need than overall ADA to overall need, indicating that they have sought to use their very limited resources to bring LEP students' access closer to that of other areas.

In general, **Map 5-1** suggests that market demand for ESL tends to drive the adult school system at the local level to respond to local need. However, the data suggest that response is generally inadequate, primarily because the ADA cap is arbitrary and entirely unrelated to actual levels of need for adult education services.

While CDE data indicate that 80% of California's adult education enrollment consists of immigrant adults, the data on ESL ADA indicate that at a spending level of over $164 million per year on ESL in 1993-1994, somewhat less than half of California's adult education budget is allocated to serving the LEP population.[7] This, in fact, suggests parity, that LEP adults are no better or worse off than other groups in need of adult education, since the LEP population is about 45% of the overall population in need and appears to be allocated a similar proportion of resources.[8] However, each individual LEP adult education enrollee receives services which cost less to provide since ESL enrollment per ADA is high.

Within this context, the decision to reimburse service providers at a 25% higher rate of payment for service to English-proficient adults "to compensate providers for the extra efforts needed to recruit and serve this population" appears to have had little justification. Fortunately, the evaluation of California's adult education plan (ETI, 1995) reports that this

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[7] In 1992-1993, ESL spending made up 43% of the adult education budget. It is uncertain how many LEP adults are enrolled in other areas of instruction such as ABE, GED, and Parent Education but it is doubtful this additional spending brings the total much beyond 50%.

[8] This is based on an estimate of approximately 2.07 million LEP adults in need of service and 4.7 million overall population in need of some sort of service.

extra incentive to serve non-LEP students had no influence on more than half of the administrators surveyed.

LEP adults' program enrollment is in most cases too transitory for them to make significant progress in achieving their learning goals.

Another surprising finding from the SSHS is that the program participation of persons who had attended an adult school program was relatively transient Because adult schools' reporting to CDE does not generate an "unduplicated" count of students' served, there has long been uncertainty as to the numbers of LEP learners served as distinguished from "enrollments" (service encounters). The SSHS provides unique insight into the rate and extent of turnover.

Table 5-2 below shows length of program participation in each of the case study communities and in the survey sample overall.

Table 5-2
Length of Enrollment
in Adult Education Program

Time in Adult Learning Program	Long Beach (N=40)	Redwood City (N=45)	Sanger (N=35)	Overall (N=120)
1 month or less	10%	7%	9%	8%
2-3 months	30%	44%	34%	37%
4-6 months	35%	11%	37%	25%
6 months or more.	75%	38%	20%	30%

** Information on duration is missing for 10 cases -- 8% of those who reported having attended a formal learning program.*

Table 5-2 suggests that most of the LEP adults who have been served by an adult learning program need additional learning opportunities to successfully make a distinctive change in their skills levels. Given these levels of participation, even successful program participation is likely to have resulted in only about 4 points gain on the CASAS ESL listening scale or 5 points on the CASAS ESL reading scale.[9] Within this context, it is

difficult to argue that "course completion" (typically for a 14-week course) is truly meaningful as a measure of skills development.

It is worthwhile to reflect in context on the service quality implications of our SSHS finding that, two-fifths of the respondents in a random sample of persons who we screened specifically on the basis of their English-language skills limitations had already been "served" by the adult education system. This finding does not mean that instructional quality is necessarily poor. The data on duration of enrollment may, to the contrary, explain the paradox that, by some indicators (i.e., participant satisfaction), service quality is good while, by other indicators (i.e., observable outcomes) it is poor. Perhaps the most precise and accurate mode of referring to the problem is to say that the system as a whole appears to be ineffective in assisting those it serves to make substantial learning gains, even if specific sub-components are effective.

The data on duration of enrollment strongly suggest the need for focused and innovative strategies to make it possible for LEP adults to have extensive enough contact with an adult learning program to make a difference in their lives. These data also serve as a partial basis for understanding the contradiction that, although learners report favorably on their adult school experience, they are hard-pressed to say what new skills they have developed as a result of that experience. We discuss the implications of this finding in connection with our recommendations for improving the adult education system's ability to foster lifelong learning in **Chapter 6** of this report.

The California Adult Education system faces an immediate emergency in responding to rapidly-escalating demand for ESL-citizenship instruction for naturalization during 1997-1998.

For the past three years, the California Department of Education has provided special funding for ESL/citizenship instruction to assist local adult schools and community-based organizations in providing instruction to legal permanent residents applying for naturalization with the ESL-citizenship instruction they need to: a) meet INS citizenship

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[9] The median enrollment time for SSHS respondents who had attended an adult learning program was 3.8 months. Assuming a typical schedule of 2-3 class meetings per week over the period of enrollment, the mean participation level is comparable to the 80-120 hour period of instruction on which CASAS pre/post test estimates of learning gains are based. See CASAS, **Student Progress and Goal Attainment: Federally-Funded ABE Programs in California: 1994-1995** for background on learner gains.

knowledge requirements (by passing the test or oral examination), and b) meet INS requirements to demonstrate knowledge of "simple" everyday English.

The medium-term level of demand for instruction in relation to naturalization is discussed at length in **Chapter 2**. Here it is most useful to note that focus groups with local adult school staff, students, and out-of-school LEP adults, also indicate that demand has begun to grow, as had been expected, with passage of the "welfare" reform legislation and that it is escalating rapidly.

The interaction among several different factors can be expected to generate a very large spike of demand for ESL-citizenship instruction beginning in the spring and summer of 1997. The first factor is the phase-in schedule for the provisions of H.R. 3734 relating to legal permanent residents' (LPR's) eligibility for SSI and Food Stamps: LPR eligibility for both programs will terminate in 1997. The second factor is that at least in some areas of California there will be aggressive naturalization campaigns designed to naturalize somewhere in the order of 75% of affected SSI recipients and a smaller proportion of affected Food Stamp recipients.

There are many uncertainties about the immediate level of demand for ESL-Citizenship instruction because: a) the proportion of the affected SSI/Food Stamp recipient population for whom the English-language proficiency requirements are waivable due to age and length of residence has not been computed, b) the proportion of SSI and Food Stamp recipients who are both LPR's and limited in English is unknown, c) exact levels of naturalization applicants are unknown because a minority of LPR's may retain service eligibility due to satisfying the "40 quarters of earnings" requirements, military service, or refugee status, without seeking citizenship and d) the administration is negotiating with Congress to soften the provisions barring elderly and disabled LPR's from receiving SSI.

Despite these uncertainties, demand for naturalization-related ESL/citizenship instruction can be expected to be very large. For example, a 12-county northern California cross-agency consortium consisting of county government, community-based immigrant organizations, local adult schools, and community foundations has set a target of approximately 50,000 naturalizations in 1997 in the San Francisco Bay Area and surrounding rural areas. This level of new naturalization demand might be expected to generate at least 5,000 new ESL/Citizenship students in this one region within the next

year. Reportedly, similar cross-agency efforts are underway in Southern California and in rural areas. Statewide increases in demand for immediate ESL/Citizenship service might be in the range of 5,000-30,000 slots.

A particular concern is that many among this particular service population may find it difficult to participate in regular ESL/citizenship classes due to disability or illness and that all will be under severe pressure to be able to meet the English-language requirements by the date of their citizenship interview, i.e., by sometime in late 1997 or early 1998.

The California Department of Education has invested strategically in efforts to improve quality of service to LEP Adults but service quality is likely to continue to vary from provider to provider

The California Department of Education has devoted substantial research and program development resources to increasing system capacity to provide LEP students with high-quality adult education services. One major recent initiative was the promulgation, in 1992, of model standards for adult ESL programs. The second, and more extensive, effort has been provision of staff development and training via the ESL Institute component of the Staff Development Institute (SDI). Another 353-funded project has been a 3-year project at UCLA to develop a plan for developing ESL Placement Standards. A newer and smaller targeted initiative, the Latino Adult Education Services project is developing curriculum resources designed to encourage "teaching across the curriculum" to develop immigrant students' SCANS-linked skills. CDE-funded research on ESL assessment practices has not yet been used in regular service delivery so it would not have been possible for it to impact service delivery yet.

The Model Standards for Adult ESL

SDI has provided training on the California Department of Education's Model Standards in all areas of adult basic education, including ESL. These staff development activities were ranked relatively low in terms of effectiveness by participants, with only 57% judging the activities to be "very effective." Unfortunately, participant evaluations are not reported separately for the ESL workshops.

The key objectives articulated for ESL programs in the Model ESL Standards document are, for the most part, well-founded. The emphasis on increasing both productive use of English as well as receptive skills is justified as are goals such as "integrate language acquisition with relevant life experiences stressing the importance of critical thinking, problem solving and self sufficiency." What is much less clear is the extent to which the Model Standards might provide practical guidance which would help local providers in changing the extent to which the adult education system does develop LEP adults' ability to function successfully in all the major domains of their lives.

While the ESL model program standards are generic and not particularly demanding, the curriculum standards are slightly more demanding. However, the information provided us by students in the case study communities suggest that the program standards are not likely to be fully implemented by service providers. For example, we heard little evidence that curriculum was specifically targeted to meet students needs or that surveys of student goals and interests were used to guide curriculum development or as a basis for evaluating service qualit.. although this is a theme throughout the Model Standards document. In focus groups we did hear some evidence that many instructional activities were in line with the model standards The evaluation and testing standards are unobjectionable but likely to have only minimal relationship to or impact on prevailing practices.

The material put forward in the Model Standards document to suggest appropriate content standards for ESL instruction at seven distinct levels provides an inadequate basis for configuring instruction to respond to the real-world language demands faced by LEP adults. In particular, the Model Standards are insufficient to assure development of skills in several of the critical areas of SCANS competencies such as "learning to learn", "understanding systems", and in real-world contexts of problem-solving, information acquisition and analysis, or moderately demanding communication tasks.

The Model Standards for ESL programs document represents a positive, but only modest, investment in improving education service quality for LEP adults. The document clearly does not provide a solid basis for achieving the nominal objectives articulated in the National Education Goals, for delivering "world quality" adult learning, or for meeting the objectives of the California Strategic Plan for Adult Education. Guidance of the sort meant to be provided in the Model Standards is, quite probably a necessary condition for

managing service quality but, in this case, the guidance does not appear to be a sufficient condition or resource for achieving consistent high quality.

Because this study was not designed to be a program evaluation we did not conduct classroom observations. However, in the course of focus groups with instructors from the adult schools in the case study communities, we did not hear the Model Standards referred to as an important consideration in individual or team efforts to respond to student needs. Focus groups of in-school students did not provide specific detail to be certain whether a program might be seen as "aligned" with the Model Standards or not, except that the Hmong focus groups suggest that the adult school instructional activities were not aligned to even those minimal standards.

Staff Development Institute (SDI) - ESL Staff Development Activities

Adult education staff attending ESL staff development workshops gave them very high marks, with 80% rating them as "very effective" and 14% rating them as the most valuedtraining activities they had participated in.

During 1995-1996, the SDI offered 67 workshops oriented toward increasing service providers' staff capabilities in the ESL instructional area, providing training to 672 different staff.[10] Staff development options included innovative and structured efforts to provide mentoring designed to increase practical skills to ESL teachers. Capacity development efforts also addressed program planning by local service providers (Tools for Building Quality ESL Programs), training designed to encourage local staff development efforts (Designing and Implementing ESL Professional Development Plans), and five offerings designed to improve instructional quality (Essential Elements, ESL for the Multi-Level Classroom, Grammar and Pronunciation, Writing I, II, and ESL-Citizenship Content-based Instruction and Process).

While this multi-stranded capacity development initiative would appear to provide a well-balanced investment in service quality improvement, the level of investment is not adequate to assure service quality throughout a system employing more than 18,000

[10] Joan Polster, Director of SDI, kindly provided tabulations of participation by workshop area.

instructional staff in which there is an estimated 30-40% annual turnover.[11] Assuming that approximately half of the total adult school staffing is involved in providing services to LEP adults, the SDI staff development activities probably reach somewhere less than 10% of those in need of in-service training. Furthermore, the Director of the SDI, Joan Polster, believes that workshop attendees are likely to represent the most motivated and most experienced staff rather than those who most need traiing since workshop attendance is voluntary. Further constraints on the effectiveness of the SDI efforts include the fact that not all districts provide support for instructional staff who attend the SDI workshops. Reportedly availability of stipends varies from workshop to workshop.

As a result of new leadership at the state level, staff development emphasis has shifted toward a strategy of systemic change, targeting staff development toward "agents of change" who, subsequently, will be expected to engage in efforts at the local level to re-configure the service delivery system to be more effective in meeting world-class standards. The initiative is promising in that it recognizes the need for systemic change and the advantages of de-centralization; on the other hand, it is not clear how effectively local adult schools will be able to respond to this shift in staff development responsibility. We believe there are risks that this strategic shift may increase the unevenness of service quality within the California adult education system, unless there is an adequate period of transition and explicit attention as to how service quality will be maintained throughout the state. The funding level for smaller programs would not seem adequate to make it possible for even the most skilled administrator to focus seriously and effectively on fundamental system re-design.

The SDI efforts to develop local adult schools' ability to respond to the needs of LEP learners is an important investment in service quality improvement. However, it is not clear that, at the current level of funding and training service delivery this useful investment will be adequate to leverage substantial movement toward uniform high-quality service.

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[11] Staffing levels are about at 16,000+ for adult schools only. If CBO's and community colleges are included in system capacity, staffing levels are much higher.

The Adult ESL Test Development Plan and Specifications for Placement Instruments

A recurring issue in serving LEP adults has been the issue of language-skills assessment as a basis for placement at the appropriate level. The technically sophisticated research effort by UCLA's Center for the Study of Evaluation has some merit. A particularly attractive feature is that it recommends multi-stage language assessment. It also makes appropriate process recommendations regarding the ultimate approach to developing final instrumentation. However, it appears to have only tangential relevance to the central issues faced by local adult schools in understanding and responding to LEP adults' learning needs.

As we have discussed at length in **Chapters 2** and **4**, LEP adults' needs cannot be reduced to building English-language proficiency. Moreover, the most appropriate and effective techniques for assessing their learning needs are holistic, multi-dimensional ones which take into consideration a range of concerns which enter into developing an effective individualized learning and skills development strategy for each student. Even if UCLA turns out to have provided the California adult education system a machine-tool die for ultimately manufacturing a better "dipstick" for measuring English-language proficiency among LEP students, there is no reason to believe this would have a significant impact on quality of service to LEP adults, because problems of placement in an appropriate level of ESL instruction are relatively minor in comparison to program design limitations, curriculum framework, and instructional methodology in affecting student outcomes.

Yet another deficiency in the framework is that it is anchored to the Model Standards and, thus, to a relatively weak framework for describing and building skills in English language use. As is the case in the Model Standards, UCLA's prototype test items are minimally linked to LEP adults' actual English-language use in workplace, family, or community life in the social universe in which LEP adults live. Essentially, they serve to assess proficiency in "mainstream" English.

Thus, the prototype standards ignore the challenging issue of determining the extent to which the real-world language experience of LEP adults who have lived for varying lengths of time in a California community which is at least partially English-speaking, might affect an ESL placement decision. This is not merely a technical issue: contemporary

research in sociolinguistics emphasizes sociodialectical variation and even the emergence of variants of English which serve as a lingua franca in multi-ethnic urban communities where a wide range of languages are spoken. LEP adults' proficiency in non-standard English is likely to be as important a consideration in appropriate placement as is their proficiency in relation to the benchmark of standard English.

The extent to which the ESL Placement instruments might ultimately improve system responsiveness to LEP adults is unknown because the current UCLA product is only a framework for eventually developing such instrumentation. However, further investment in this effort would seem to represent a poor use of limited R&D funding for the reasons discussed above. A much more appropriate response to the assessment issue would be to develop a more holistic, "integrated" system of assessment which serves not only to guide placement but which also assesses students' progress and provide them with useful feedback on that progress.

The Latino Adult Education Services Project

The California Department of Education has supported the LAES Project to develop curriculum resources to assist service providers in moving toward instruction which concurrently develops functional skills in the domains of workplace, family life, community life, and lifelong learning. The project's efforts to develop the curriculum resources include: a) creation of a 30-module curriculum framework/instructional resource encyclopedia, Pais Desconocido/Tierra de Oportunidad which addresses common facets of the lives of LEP adults, particularly immigrants, b) small-scale piloting and evaluation of the resource package in two adult school systems serving large numbers of LEP Latinos -- Sweetwater Adult School and Salinas Adult School, c) revisions to the resource package as a result of feedback from the field tests, d) dissemination to interested adult schools.

The extent to which the LAES resource packages will improve service providers' responsiveness is unknown as the field test evaluation is not yet complete. The final resource package will be disseminated in 1997.

Summary Conclusions -- System Response to LEP Adults' Needs

In many important ways, the adult education system has, indeed, been responsive to the needs of LEP adults in California. At the local level, adult schools are allocating an equitable proportion of resources to serving the LEP population. At the state level, there have been substantial investments in staff development and efforts to improve service quality.

While the response has been vigorous, it is not adequate to assure access by all LEP adults needing and seeking service nor is it adequate to assure that every LEP adult (or even almost all) will receive quality educational services. Given the reality of finite resources, there are inevitably trade-offs between efforts to increase system service capacity and service quality. Taking these tradeoffs into account, our conclusion is that priority must be given to the task of improving service quality. This report includes recommendations regarding policy and program planning options which should be considered to bring this about.

California's adult education system has not, in fact, done all it could to leverage additional resources from volunteers, through collaboration with other human service providers, from appeals to the private sector, or foundation funders for either service expansion or service quality improvement. However, it has extended itself to push the limits of what was possible with currently available levels of public sector funding. By stretching resources thin (e.g. operating over cap, using part-time instructors) it is likely that the organizational culture of dedicated response to immediate service demand has directly competed with time which must be invested in reflecting on strategies to deliver quality service, leveraging additional resources, and planning to work more collaboratively.

Future strategies for leveraging resources cannot be successful if they are based primarily on a public relations strategy, i.e., "getting others to better understand what we are doing." As resources for social programs become increasingly constrained, investments will not flow simply on need but rather, to programs which are able to demonstrate that they can reliably deliver top-quality service and observable outcomes. There is some truth to the age-old observation that the best marketing strategy is to produce a good product. This is an important consideration in the decision to prioritize investment in service quality improvement rather than service expansion.

Our review of the different dimensions of LEP adults' learning needs, taken in conjunction with contemporary theoretical insights into adult learning in general and second-language learning in particular, suggest the need for the California adult education system to reflect on what its mission really is. At a very fundamental conceptual level, the idea of "teaching English" (as opposed to facilitating LEP adults' "learning English), the temptation to reduce educational service to LEP adults to ESL or ESL/citizenship instruction, is at odds with what we hear from LEP adults themselves about their skills development needs. The vitality, dedication, and flexibility of California's adult educators cannot be doubted. However, in aggregate, what we see is an accumulation of practical insights, a high degree of empathy with LEP adult learners, but little sense of vision, innovation, or understanding of the intellectual challenges faced by the system and those it serves.

From our perspective, the most basic assumptions about adult education curriculum and program design urgently need re-thinking and, then, re-engineering, starting from a client-centered perspective. The most critical element in such re-engineering is thinking through what it means to be a lifelong learner, quite specifically, what it means for a LEP adult, immigrant or native-born, and how the adult education system can respond in a truly innovative and flexible fashion to foster success in this arena. Crucial issues to address include:

- the issue of counseling and guidance,
- the issue of building a learning continuum--moving from one "course" to another,
- the issue of extending learning beyond the classroom both while a student is enrolled in class and afterwards
- the issue of explicitly targeting "learning to learn" and building students' ability to pursue self-directed learning
- the issue of individualizing instruction -- assessing a student's learning needs and objectives at initial contact with a program, establishing and maintaining a dialogue with students about their progress, and providing a fulcrum for sustained post-program learning

- the issue of fully describing and measuring what contributions adult education programs can make to LEP learners' human capital and LEP communities' social capital if, indeed, adult education is to have value beyond certification of "seat time"

- the issue of structuring and implementing strategies to develop students' competencies "across the board" in the domains of workplace, family, and, most urgently, community life

- the issue of extending the rudimentary collaborative relationships which now exist into full-fledged multi-agency service networks providing LEP adults with integrated program designs which combine multiple strands of activities to support and enhance skills development
- the issue of using currently available information technology effectively to expand service capacity and supplement classroom instruction so as to approximate the ideal of "anytime", "any place", "any pace" adult learning.

Without such a commitment to re-inventing adult education in California it will be extremely difficult for the system to respond successfully either to the immediate challenges it faces in the context of "welfare reform" and program consolidation of employment training and adult basic skills instruction or to the long-term challenge of successfully supporting LEP adults' full social and economic integration into California's emerging multi-ethnic society. With such a commitment, California has the resources to develop a service delivery system which could truly be considered "world class."

A first step toward developing the cross-agency consensus necessary to embark on major re-engineering of California's approach to serving LEP adults (who make up a majority of the adult education service population) might consist of re-examination by CDE leadership and the legislature of the role adult education must play as part of a broad agenda of social policy for the first decade of the 21st century. A concurrent step might be outreach to California business, another important stakeholder in an effective service delivery system, in order to explore new modes of collaboration in adult education programs designed to seriously and meaningfully support LEP adults' personal skills development to fulfill their full potential.

Chapter 6
Recommendations

This concluding chapter presents a set of summary recommendations which, if adopted, would result in systemwide improvements in adult education services to LEP adults. These recommendations are organized into several distinct, but related, action areas:

- Resource Mobilization, Allocation, and Funding
- Program Mission, Guidelines, and Accountability
- Staff and Organizational Development
- Applied Research, Planning and Collaborative Service Delivery

The recommendations stem directly from the research in the current project but are designed, at the same time, to be linked to the four major strategic goals of the California Strategic Plan for Adult Education: improved service quality and responsiveness, improved access to service users, improved accountability, and improved planning and coordination. These broad goals, while first articulated in 1989, continue to be relevant to the leadership priorities and directions at CDE as articulated at the SDI Leadership Institute in August, 1996, particularly in the context of a renewed emphasis on systemic change, support for lifelong learning, and instruction focused on skills development in all domains: workplace, family life, and community life.

These recommendations are referred to as summary ones because they are intended to initiate dialogue and help in framing key issues for CDE planning. Virtually all of the recommendations would have an impact on multiple stakeholders in California adult education. Several of the recommendations would entail legislative review, debate, and negotiation among multiple stakeholders. Adoption of other recommendations would require that CDE initiate contacts with other state agencies, community organizations, and other non-governmental sectors such as California business, immigrant advocacy groups, and other human service providers. There are, finally, a set of recommendations which could be adopted unilaterally within CDE.

The recommendations, as currently framed, are designed to put forward rational and well-justified policy and planning initiatives. That does not, of course, imply a

judgment about the political feasibility of each recommendation. Several would be viewed as major changes to the current system and would require some level of concurrence from multiple stakeholders. Ultimately, in the normal course of events, each would only be adopted after discussion, review, debate, and negotiation.

The recommendations, as framed here, take into account several of the major policy and service planning challenges faced by California state and local government. The first of these sets of concerns relates to making state and local response to welfare reform effective. The second relates to the prospects of a re-designed federal system for adult education and employment training which heavily emphasizes performance-based accountability, multi-agency collaboration, and "seamless" service delivery within a cross-agency framework for case management (i.e., "one stop" service centers). The recommendations are framed so that their implementation would provide the California adult education system some strategic advantages in a newly competitive national program environment of consolidated adult learning programs. The recommendations' emphasis on support for ongoing lifelong learning would serve to prepare California adult education for a re-engineered federal system even if funding moved eventually to be voucher-based.

Analysis of the tactical issues relating to developing an agenda for implementing any or all of these recommendations is beyond the scope of the current study. It is, however, highly recommended that the tactical planning process allow ample opportunities for input and discussions among those who would be affected. Ideally, such a process could be expanded to provide opportunity for input from LEP adults themselves, from California business, and from stakeholders within and outside state government.

Many of the recommendations presented here are not phrased in terms of initiatives which would only affect LEP adults. The reality is that LEP adults make up more than half of the overall California adult education service population. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the most effective way to positively impact services to them might be through "mainstream" initiatives which affect <u>all</u> adult learners. At the same time, the set of recommendations presented here includes several which are specifically targeted to address issues which primarily affect the LEP service population.

In summary, the recommendations reflect the analysis which emerged from the study, namely that the top priority for improving California adult education system's

responsiveness to LEP adults must be service quality improvement. It is important to recognize that improved service quality can, in fact, contribute both to positive program impact and to increased service capacity by moving people through the service delivery "pipeline" faster and more efficiently, thereby facilitating access by and service to other adult learners.

The specific summary recommendations developed in the course of this study are presented below by area.

Resource Mobilization, Allocation, and Funding

The current funding and administrative framework for adult education in California does not provide an optimal environment for building a 21st century adult learning system. The recommendations relating to resource mobilization, allocation, and funding all require high-level policy consideration within the California Department of Education, legislative consideration, and debate among stakeholders, including California business, adult learners themselves, and community leaders.

Recommendation 1. ***Rationalize and realign state apportionment funding for adult education.***

It is now possible to generate reliable ballpark estimates of the "universe of need" for adult education services--among LEP adults and other service populations. Implementation of this recommendation would entail removing the current arbitrary district-by-district cap on ADA and use "best available" data generated in California's strategic planning as a basis for allocating adult education funding to allow equitable service access for all California adults who seek to improve their basic skills. Adoption of this recommendation would entail a major change in the current system of funding for adult education and would require new legislation.

The re-alignment process might be based on a gradual "upward floating" model through which at least 50% of any increases in total apportionment funding beyond the COLA should be allocated to allow the districts with the lowest relative level of funding to "float up" to the mean level of ADA/service population for the state as a whole.

Estimates of the "service population" or "universe of need" should be based on the multi-variate regression model developed by Stephen Reder for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. This model generates synthetic estimates of the numbers of persons falling into NALS Level 1 and could, be fined-tuned in order to adjust estimates of the distribution of limited literacy person for differential census undercount using a multi-variate regression model developed by David Fein in connection with the Bureau of the Census Causes of Undercount Survey.

Determination as to whether re-alignment of funding should be driven by county-level estimates of California's adult education population or estimates at the district level should be made only after careful review of the quality of census datasets which reference school district boundaries.

Recommendation 2. ***Restructure adult education funding mechanisms to provide incentives to encourage service providers to leverage matching support in the form of cash, in-kind, and volunteer resources to expand the California adult education system for basic skills development.***

Leveraging matching funding serves to expand service delivery capacity while, at the same time, stimulating inter-agency collaboration, volunteer involvement, and responsiveness to the concerns of multiple community stakeholders. The issue of how strong the "fund match" incentives should be is a question which deserves careful analysis and discussion, within CDE and in the legislature, and within the field.

One policy option is to establish a set ratio of primary to matching funds. Another is to phase-in matching with ongoing ratcheting of match requirements as provider experience in leveraging matching funds increases. It should be observed that mechanisms which provide funding "carrots" to encourage generation of matching funds are almost always preferable to mechanisms which mandate a given match or which are perceived as punishing service providers who have a lower level of resources. Allowance of volunteer-based in-kind as a component of the match would serve to counter arguments that matching is infeasible for poorer counties or districts.

Stimulation of efforts to recruit volunteers among the LEP population is an important positive feature of this recommendation as such involvement would provide a

natural means to build LEP adults' experience participating in issues of concern to their community via peer-tutoring, counseling, outreach or other activities where they could make a real contribution. The experience of other programs such as Head Start in serving low-income populations is that community-based volunteer involvement is very positive.

This recommendation, also, would require new legislation. In terms of state-level collaboration, a particularly promising initiative might be to build linkages with the California Commission on Quality of Life Through Service, the state agency which administers national and community service programs funded by the Corporation for National Service. Additional possibilities for collaboration and resource leveraging might be available through joint efforts with the Department of Economic Opportunity.

Recommendation 3. ***Authorize enhanced funding for targeted innovations to improve system capability to achieve high-priority service objectives, including at least: a) improved assessment, counseling, and guidance, b) accelerated, intensive English-language instruction, c) post-program coaching and other support for lifelong learning.***

California's current adult education system provides services at "bargain basement" prices with the result that service quality is, understandably, uneven. Enhanced funding would, by increasing service effectiveness, result in "more bang for the buck." The crucial policy recognition is that "cost per hour of instruction" -- a measure of system throughput -- is meaningless in terms of the service delivery system's ability to produce results. Policy concerns, at least in some sectors, are beginning, once again, to consider whether quality service is being provided or not. However, service provider accountability for producing results must be linked to funding which allows providers to build the capacity to reliably deliver quality service.

In terms of service quality for LEP adults, the identified high-priority service objectives are particularly important but, if these service improvement objectives were adopted system-wide, they would be likely benefit all adult education clients.

A central problem in delivering effective service is that funding based on "seat time" tends to discourage service providers from offering or adequately supporting services which play a crucial role in adult learners' success but which are not directly rewarded

because they entail no seat time. Inevitably, provider accountability is a policy concern in this context, but unless some mechanism is provided to support such activities there will be no incentives to move toward a system which facilitates ongoing, lifelong learning.

Care is needed in crafting such incentives. Setting level of enhanced funding limits too high might serve to constrain service delivery capacity and drive up the cost of generating impacts. Setting levels too low might not provide adequate incentives for solid planning and reporting necessary to assure provider accountability for delivering a superior service quality. It should be observed that, even if enhanced funding limits were to apparently constrain system capacity in terms of numbers of persons served per year or number of slots, program cost-effectiveness and total impact might increase as adult education students "got more" out of their adult education program participation.

Recommendation 4. ***Reassess current procedures for providing special ESL-Citizenship funding, taking into account service providers' track record and appropriateness of program design for responding to the needs of hard-to-serve groups of naturalization applicants.***

The urgency associated with naturalization campaigns in the wake of welfare reform suggests that CDE might play a more proactive role in assuring the quality of ESL-Citizenship instruction, particularly in responding to the needs of LEP adults with little schooling who will urgently need to demonstrate an adequate level of English to satisfy INS examiners' requirements.

Among this service population, there are key service sub-groups including older persons and the parents of disabled children who may have great difficulty learning in a standard classroom setting. ESL-Citizenship funding, if restructured and better linked to service demand and to outcomes might become increasingly oriented toward encouraging rapid and effective service toward "hard to serve" adult learners.

The area of ESL-Citizenship instruction might also be an area well-suited to initially test the feasibility of linking funding to modest in-kind or cash match contributions by the service provider since individual tutoring would appear to be a valuable element in effective program designs and because there is a firm foundation of collaborative efforts which make it feasible to recruit volunteers, leverage, and document matching resources.

Recommendation 5. ***The California Department of Education should initiate a phased process to systematically develop and test outcome-based funding incentives designed to encourage diversification and innovation so as to expand the menu of adult learning options and facilitate access to quality services including counseling, tutoring, and post-program support for self-directed learning.***

It is crucial to move in a systematic fashion from ADA-based funding to outcome-based funding since the current funding mechanism provides few organizational incentives for either innovation or for service provider investments in improving service quality. Traditional procedures of compliance review and accreditation provide an inadequate management tool to meet the challenges the system now faces in responding to the real-world needs of LEP adult learners.

Lifelong learning requires an aspiring learner to undertake a continuum of tasks and succeed in overcoming a host of challenges -- in the classroom and outside the classroom. Inevitably, ADA-based funding for adult education provides only an inappropriate vehicle to support the sort of integrated service delivery system which is needed to effectively support lifelong learning in the 21st century. Even if California were to greatly improve the quality of classroom instruction for LEP learners, the lack of a funding mechanism to support key services such as counseling would constrain the system's ability to achieve meaningful outcomes. A funding system which links cost reimbursement to only a single component (i.e. classroom instruction) of the optimal service mix is doomed to hamper the responsiveness and cost-effectiveness of adult education.

Legislative authorization for adult schools to set aside 5% of their ADA for innovative service delivery not linked to seat time was initially adopted as an initiative to facilitate diversification of service delivery modalities, primarily distance learning. A recent conference of the California Distance Learning Project showed that there was widespread consensus about the need for continued work toward developing appropriate outcome measures to assure accountability. One set of concerns relates to the need for valid indicators of program quality; the other relates to restructuring the 5% program to provide not simply funding options but positive incentives for innovation.

The critical priority is to develop a new paradigm of support for adult learning, not a better measurement system. The fallacy inherent in contemporary policy emphases on better evaluation and measurement systems as a route for leveraging service quality is that this sort of emphasis does not generate strategies to effectively support learning or engage in the sort of innovation needed to develop quality services.

The current recommendation does not imply that major investments should be made in developing new assessment systems or testing systems which purport to measure adult competencies; such systems are all, to a certain extent, reductionistic. Past investments in such instrumentation have not contributed meaningfully to the development of a more flexible and innovative adult learning system; in fact, service providers focus on pre-post test results has detracted from their ability to foster the intellectual agility, self-confidence, and multi-faceted abilities needed to succeed in dealing with the complexities of the communities they live in, family life, or the demands of the high-performance workplace. Strategies to reliably assess service quality and effectiveness are available which do not rely on this sort of testing. They include, for example, improved techniques for examining customer satisfaction surveys, post-program followup of students, and focus groups Such techniques are affordable and, thus, it should be recognized that outcomes can be assessed without diverting huge amounts of funding from the basic task of providing quality service to the "shadow task" of assessing and demonstrating results.

LEP adults residing outside the primary immigrant-receiving areas of California, particularly those living in isolated, remote, rural areas of California are likely to benefit greatly from implementation of this recommendation in terms of both improved service access and quality. Even in well-served urban areas, sub-groups of prospective adult learners whose schedule, family commitments, or particular learning style makes classroom group instruction infeasible will benefit from the availability of support for self-directed learning using one or several modalities -- e.g. videocassettes, audiocassettes, tutoring, and walk-in access to computer-based learning systems.

Program Mission, Guidelines, and Accountability

Debate among adult education stakeholders regarding realignment of funding priorities and procedures is inevitably a time-consuming process which will move forward over the course of years, not months or weeks. As this debate moves forward, it is feasible

for the California Department of Education to concurrently undertake a re-examination of its program mission, administrative guidelines, and systems for assuring provider accountability. Efforts by the adult education system to re-examine its approach to the challenges it faces in serving LEP (and other) adults who are system clients have potential, even if no fundamental changes are made in the current resource allocation system. If fundamental change in funding systems is indeed viable, ongoing and robust efforts for realigning and redesigning current service strategies will provide a valuable foundation of experience for crafting new policies and procedures for implementing a "world class" adult education service delivery system. The recommendations of this section lay out a range of potential initiatives.

Recommendation 6. ***Revise provisions relating to the 10 authorized areas of instruction to explicitly permit designation of courses as "comprehensive basic skills" instruction designed to concurrently build skills in multiple functional domains.***

Implementation of this recommendation would provide clear-cut guidance to service providers regarding the desirability of teaching "across the curriculum" to concurrently develop skills in multiple domains of functioning.

To a certain extent, the current service delivery system may be providing a measure of "comprehensive basic skills instruction' to LEP adults enrolled in ESL courses. The difficulty is that, while experienced ESL teachers may effectively address the full range of LEP learners' needs, the system is not configured to facilitate "best practices." The revision to the 10 authorized areas would explicitly sanction and encourage innovative instructional strategies to build the skills which are now developed (often inefficiently) in separate ABE and ESL courses. The recommended revision to the authorized 10 areas of instruction would continue to allow delivery of ESL-only and ABE-only courses where appropriate.

This recommendation, while benefiting all adult education clients, has particular importance for LEP adults who experience the most problems when ESL and ABE instruction is sequential rather than concurrent. Implementation of this recommendation would serve to directly address LEP adults' expressed concerns about the problem of needing to know English to go on to receive other kinds of adult education service (e.g.

basic skills development in numeracy or vocational training). While this recommendation requires legislative approval, it should not be a controversial one.

Recommendation 7. ***Develop program guidelines specifying a process for developing "individual educational plans"(IEPs) for each adult education student served in a "basic skills development" area of instruction, i.e., ABE, ESL, or "comprehensive basic skills."***

Implementation of this recommendation is not administratively challenging and supports "best practices" for facilitating adult learning. Adoption of the recommendation would not recommend IEP's only for learners who seek to engage in major skills development efforts, not for special purpose course offerings under others of the 10 authorized areas such as child development.

This recommendation stems from the analysis presented in **Chapter 4** of this report regarding appropriate approaches for assessing LEP adults' needs. Adoption by the field would result in improved service quality and improved responsiveness to clients who need support services to participate successfully in a program of adult learning. At the same time, it would provide a basis for demonstrating to a wide range of stakeholders (including adult education clients themselves) the benefits provided by adult education programs).

The recommended process should specify, at a minimum: a) an initial comprehensive assessment of student learning objectives, resources, service needs, and development of an initial IEP, b) discussion of post-course/program lifelong learning options to achieve personal skills development objectives, c) arrangements for provision of one-on-one feedback and counseling if requested by the enrollee, d) explicit discussion with enrolling students of post-program support services available to them, d) maintenance of a student "case management" record accessible to the student containing the initial IEP and subsequent modifications.

Implementation of this recommendation would serve to assist California adult education service providers in preparing to function in the context of a "one stop shopping" environment which is likely to result from program consolidation efforts at the federal level. Many human service agencies and employment training providers already have one form or another of client-centered case management and their experience has been that case

management can result in great improvements in service effectiveness if the emphasis is on the client, not on gatekeeping.

The process for developing this guidance should include input from the field and from agencies which have a track record in using this sort of approach to assure service quality (e.g. Department of Rehabilitation, Head Start, employment training providers). The dissemination process should include development of both written materials and staff development activities via the Staff Development Institute.

Recommendation 8. ***Develop and disseminate guidelines and technical assistance materials on "learning to learn" and effective strategies for pursuing ongoing personal skills development including participation in formal programs of classroom-based instruction, accessing distance learning resources, and self-directed skills development.***

The "dropout" rate from adult education programs has always been high and continues unchanged. While there is an inevitable amount of dropout due to unavoidable personal circumstances and "browsing", use of scarce resources to provide minimal levels of service is not cost-effective.

Adoption of this recommendation would benefit all adult learners served by the system but particularly LEP adults with little or no schooling. The data on LEP adults' program participation presented in **Chapter 2** shows quite high levels of transitory service utilization but few examples of sustained, ongoing learning. The issue of self-directed learning is particularly important for LEP adults because many have a very large skills gap between their current skills and the skills they need to be agile in an information-based English-speaking society. Learning to learn can provide LEP adults with an important nudge toward the self-confidence which will sustain their ongoing effort as an adult learn.

The issue of self-directed learning is also particularly important to LEP adults because they face so many constraints on program participation -- e.g. shifting work schedules, child care responsibilities, inadequate transportation. A crucial service objective is to assure that the adult program participant who drops out of an adult education course not consider himself or herself "a failure." Addressing the possibility of multiple options for adult learning, including self-directed learning, that is, managing one's learning to use a

"mix" of resources for personal skills development, is an obvious and feasible investment in making a potential "second-time loser" into a potential success.

It is feasible to structure curriculum (e.g. with an initial 2-3 day instructional module on learning to learn) to assure that even students who are relatively early dropouts from a program take away with them, the foundation skills they need to continue building their skills, a sense of confidence that, they too, can succeed in learning, and an awareness that taking charge of their own learning is possible and may even allow them to resume their participation in formal classroom-based instruction in the future. The "learning to learn" activity might even result in a certificate providing learners, early in their program participation, symbolic assurance that they can "make it."

Implementation is affordable and has a very high likelihood of generating very substantial learner benefits at a minimal cost. The process for developing and disseminating guidelines should be similar to the process described in connection with Recommendation 7 above.

Recommendation 9. ***Develop and disseminate guidelines and technical assistance materials on post-course/program follow-up support in the form of access to counseling, "coaching" in connection with self-directed personal skills development, and access to resources materials for self-directed learning such as videocassettes, reference materials, and books.***

The service paradigm of learning linked to course completion focused only on nominal achievement of an arbitrary punctuation point in a continuous and ongoing process of adult learning is distracting to adult learners and service providers alike.

Course completers may either feel proud of having completed a course or somewhat frightened by the prospect of being "on their own" for further skills-building. For LEP adults who characteristically have so little experience with formal learning this dynamic is particularly problematic. LEP adults we talked to regularly identified their interaction with the instructor as the "high point" of their adult learning experience. Provision of limited post-program coaching to support self-directed ongoing learning is an affordable strategy both to assist a recent course-completer in transitioning to self-directed learning and to overcome "glitches" and unforeseen problems confronting an inexperienced learner.

The idea that the adult education service provider's sphere of influence extends beyond provision of service to "on-line" clients, adult learners enrolled in a formal classroom-based or distance learning course, to "off-line" clients, learners moving forward on their own may require substantial re-orientation and new funding mechanisms (as noted in connection with **Recommendation 3**). One important consideration, even from the classroom perspective, is that system efforts to facilitate students' exit and re-entry into the adult education system has the potential to make classroom life smoother and more predictable.

The recommendation for post-course/program follow-up support services also has benefits from the accountability perspective as it provides a mechanism for improved tracking of student outcomes. If there is even moderate success in retaining contact with students, service providers will be in a better position to demonstrate to important stakeholders such as the legislature the medium-term outcomes of the adult education program intervention.

It might be appropriate to initially use Section 353 funds to support a limited number of demonstration projects testing alternative approaches to delivering follow-up services. Such demonstrations could provide practical insights for subsequent technical assistance. At least one important variation to be tested might be collaborative ventures among multiple agency partners to conduct the follow-up and to maintain networks to make provision of follow-up service more efficient (e.g. via drop-in tutoring or counseling at a local neighborhood contracted service provider, a participating community college, or volunteer-based program).

Recommendation 10. ***Develop and disseminate guidelines and technical assistance materials on "best practices" for micro-planning to improve responsiveness and effectiveness of service to diverse populations of LEP adults in a provider's service area.***

Implementation of this recommendation is a useful complement to intensified data-based strategic planning at the state level (see **Recommendation 16**). The outcome of micro-planning would be better-targeted, instructional designs to respond to the special needs of LEP adults in general and identified priority sub-populations.

Particular attention might be given to identifying "special service" sub-populations of LEP adults in the local area in need of service (e.g. migrant and seasonal farmworkers, female heads of household, legal permanent residents urgently needing ESL/citizenship instruction to naturalize). Once identified, micro-planning attention would, ideally, focus on developing ways to respond to specific problems which jeopardize service quality or service access (e.g. distance learning, establishment of a satellite service site, recruitment of local volunteers to provide follow-up post-program "coaching").

The research methodology used in the current Aguirre International study provides a useful model to guide local efforts. The key design features are: a) formulation of appropriate applied research hypotheses which when tested will provide practical guidance for program design, b) appropriate use of extant data (e.g. census data, special studies by local government, universities, etc.), c) use of an affordable strategy such as small-scale survey or focus-group sessions to deepen insight into service delivery challenges and get input on "draft" ideas for new, more responsive services (i.e., "market research").

Here too, development of guidelines and technical assistance materials might benefit from initial pilot projects to test and fine-tune a generic micro-planning approach to see how best concrete results can be achieved rapidly and affordably.

Recommendation 11. ***Reassess the utility of the ESL Model Program Standards and revise if necessary.***

This is a minor recommendation. The rationale for the recommendation is, principally, our sense in this study that this mechanism for service quality assurance is either ineffective or not being implemented.

Recommendation 12. ***Develop and disseminate Model Program Standards for a newly-authorized "comprehensive basic skills" area of instruction.***

Such an effort should give particular emphasis to the issues of: a) teaching across the curriculum for skills development in all major functional domains, b) integration of English-language learning and "cross-domain" functional skills development, c) extending English-language learning beyond the classroom, d) counseling and guidance issues related

to initial orientation and post-program services to develop foundation skills in "learning to learn" and managing self-directed lifelong learning.

The strategy of incorporating into instructional design a structured framework for extending use and practice of skills from the classroom into the "home turf" of other environments in which LEP adults move would seem to be a key element in achieving reliable skills development and functional competency in the major domains of life. We saw this type of framework being used effectively at Long Beach Adult School to guide instructors in their lesson planning and preliminary data from use of LAES curriculum materials at Sweetwater Adult School show the cross-domain materials to work well. A more extensive framework might guide the overall program and instructional design process.

The Latino Adult Education Services (LAES) project is focusing on the elements of "cross-domain" functional skills development and extending basic skills development (not specifically English-language learning) beyond the classroom. These efforts will contribute to implementing this objective but it is important to develop similar resource materials which explicitly address the special needs of refugee populations. Given the solid foundations established by the cross-agency English-Language Training Task Force coordinated by the Refugee Programs Bureau in the Department of Social Services, a cross-agency collaborative effort might be particularly appropriate in assuring that model standards were sensitive to refugees' needs.

Staff and Organizational Development

Improved resource allocation, a newly-focused vision of the mission of adult education programs, and an administrative framework oriented toward quality and innovation can only yield results if they are followed with appropriate staff and organizational development efforts. It must, however, be emphasized that a new vision and orientation toward delivery of adult learning services must come first, so as to provide a solid foundation for staff and organizational development. Staff and organizational development can then proceed from a "clean sheet" . In the section below we recommend several initiatives in this area.

Recommendation 13. ***Increase funding support for staff development activities to improve service quality to LEP adults, with specific attention to the issue of reaching and configuring staff development activities to respond to the needs of less-experienced part-time instructors.***

This recommendation responds to the specific limitations of current staff development efforts, namely that they probably reach only about 10% of the ESL instructors who are the primary service providers to LEP adults. The emphasis on reaching less-experienced part-time instructors is not novel, but it is well-justified. This has been a perennial concern for adult education and is an obvious corollary of a nominal commitment to building a "world class" adult education system which assures service quality to all groups of adult learners.

Recommendation 14. ***Re-configure the SDI staff development training activities for ESL staff and others working with LEP adults to address priority areas of service capacity improvement*** .

This is a straightforward recommendation suggesting a targeted staff development effort which is coordinated with overall system redesign. Emphasis should be given to developing effective instructional practices for responding to LEP adults' special needs in the priority areas identified in the previous recommendations: a) development of IEPs, b) "learning to learn" and self-directed learning, c) extending English-language learning beyond the classroom, d) "best practices" for contextualizing English-language learning and use of promising instructional methodologies such as collaborative learning, and multi-stranded program designs to maximize program impacts.

LEP respondents to the SSHS survey and focus group participants in the current study had many comments which serve to highlight the tremendous value of interactive dialogue between instructors and students. LEP adult learners' praise often focused on personal interactions with instructors as did their complaints. Essentially, this sort of social interaction provides a valuable foundation for role-modeling successful communication in unfamiliar contexts. "Active listening" and collaborative feedback to stimulate students' reflection and personal self-assessment can be expected to play an important role in developing individual education plans (IEPs) which go beyond the obvious to guide individual learning in a meaningful way. Top priority might well be given to this effort.

Whatever CDE's decision about service delivery system capacity-building priorities might be, it would be appropriate to align staff development efforts to reflect those system objectives.

Recommendation 15. ***Develop and disseminate guidelines describing effective strategies for organizational change, staff recruitment, and staff development activities in order to improve service providers' ability to offer a comprehensive program***.

Priority issues for these guidelines to address include the following: a) effective IEP development, counseling, and comprehensive assessment, b) post-program "coaching" support for self-directed learning, c) effective use of professional staff, paraprofessional staff, and volunteers to increase service quality and capacity, d) use of team approaches, where appropriate, to improve service quality.

Increased utilization of team approaches for service delivery is particularly promising as an approach to make the adult education system more responsive and more cost-effective to LEP adults and all learners. There is no clear evidence in the research literature that higher degrees of professional training translate into effective interaction with LEP adult learners. In contrast, there is extensive evidence that program designs which provide a foundation for testing and practicing skills in a variety of environments is closely linked to learning. The strategy of "giving literacy away" described by Reder and Green over a decade ago still has merit, as do a wide range of possible team-based configurations. The common theme in well-articulated, targeted program and instructional design is that a team approach allowing for articulated specialized roles may be more reliable than expecting a single individual (i.e., the instructor) to fill all these roles as is currently the case.

Routine use of a team approach provides a framework which facilitates use of human resources which do not cost as much as professional staff whose jobs can be re-designed to allow more planning, supervision, and individualized attention if supplemented with support from paraprofessionals. In terms of benefits to the LEP learner, utilization of the team approach puts both a wider range of human resources within reach and, at the same time, provides role models when paraprofessionals and volunteers from the community being served are also part of the program team.

In terms of volunteer recruitment and deployment, the availability of several alternative (and meaningful) roles through which a concerned individual can "make a difference in their community" makes the task of matching volunteers to appropriate jobs and using them effectively when the match has been made makes logistics much easier.

Research, Planning, and Collaborative Service Delivery

Long-term improvements in California's adult education service delivery system capacity to respond to the needs of LEP adults will need to be firmly anchored in applied research, systematic planning, and increasingly collaborative approaches to service delivery. While researchers, school reform advocates, and educational leaders have long called for improved collaboration, human service delivery systems remain fragmented, based on archaic models of social program intervention. The recommended initiatives to rationalize resource allocation, reconceptualize program goals, and develop innovative strategies to foster lifelong learning will not succeed unless there is a firm commitment to work in a structured and systematic way toward a "world-class" 21st century service delivery network.

Recommendation 16. ***Explore the possibilities of multi-agency collaboration at the state level to develop improved data on the numbers, distribution, and socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of LEP adults.***

California is blessed with a state government infrastructure which includes substantial data expertise. Ideally, multi-agency collaborative efforts to generate and aggregate data on special target populations such as LEP adults is more cost-effective than duplication of effort.

Collaborative applied research efforts might include at least the following agencies, each of which can make a unique contribution to understanding the skills development needs of LEP adults: CDE Adult Education and Planning Unit, Employment Development Department, Department of Economic Opportunity, Department of Finance Population Research Unit, Department of Social Services. Collaboration in the area of applied research might provide a good foundation, an "incubator" for subsequently moving onward toward

development of innovative approaches to collaborative delivery of integrated program designs with multiple-strands of support to LEP adults.

Quite specifically, the task of understanding, and responding to the impact of welfare reform on legal permanent immigrants (a social program effort in which adult education has a major role to play) is data-intensive and presents formidable challenges in terms of forging rational and effective responses to a legislative initiative which was never fully thought through as anything more than a politically attractive symbolic act.

Recommendation 17. ***Improve coordination within CDE at the state level, and within the K-12 system at the local level to promote the development and availability of programs which provide services to the entire family, building on promising established models for responding to LEP families' needs such as Even Start and Family English Literacy program designs.***

Various researchers and educators have advocated for a collaborative response to the needs of families in which parents and children both receive services. There are well-established models to provide multi-stranded services to families and a great deal is known about the determinants of effectiveness. Interviews and focus groups in the course of this study show that support designed to enhance adults' interactions with teenagers and younger children in the course of growing up are part of many LEP adults' learning objectives and a valuable element in adult learners' ongoing efforts to build their own communication, information-gathering, analytic, and decision-making skills.

It is not clear why there still remain difficulties in developing a unified response and integrated service strategies within the public school system to the problems experienced by families with low levels of education. Anecdotal evidence suggests that internal coordination within the bureaucratic structures of K-12 districts is as difficult or more difficult than inter-agency collaboration. It is not clear why this continues to be the case but, clearly, increasing emphasis on outcomes rather than procedural administration will as part of school reform gradually shift K-12 system conditions to more easily allow such reasonable collaboration.

Where we heard of collaboration (e.g. Long Beach) it held out many benefits. Researchers, educators, and teachers are close to consensus that serving parents is an

important element in sparking and sustaining children's educational success and that serving children is an integral part of responding to their parents concerns. Where successful collaboration does begin it would seem to provide a fulcrum to provide all partners with a sense that it is within their reach to craft and implement "break the mold" strategies for responding to LEP families' needs.

Improved collaboration in delivering family-centered programs would serve to build on a well-known strength of immigrant families. At the same time, family-centered programs are an obvious priority for service to LEP families, virtually all of whom must deal in one way or another with the challenges of spanning a broad spectrum of cultural "space" as first, second, and third generation immigrants interact.

Recommendation 18. ***Develop technical assistance and resource materials for local-level planning (including community needs assessment, program design, and affordable evaluation techniques to monitor service quality) to improve responsiveness to LEP adult populations***.

This recommendation simply articulates the need for a modest developmental effort to craft the materials to provide guidance and technical assistance in micro-planning as articulated in **Recommendation 10**.

Recommendation 19. ***Explore a collaborative initiative with other concerned agencies to develop multi-stranded campaigns to promote LEP adults' learning about and full participation in community life and civic affairs***.

There is virtual consensus throughout society that citizenship is more than an American passport. It is critical to go beyond a rhetorical commitment to integrating immigrants into the mainstream of community life to begin the difficult task of building the skills of LEP adults -- both immigrant and native-born -- to participate in and contribute to the communities in which they live.

This recommendation suggests that CDE might play a major role in addressing a critical concern of California social policy -- the promotion and development of meaningful participation in the democratic process. Civic participation is particularly important for LEP adults because, as noted in a major Ford Foundation study, the Changing Relations

Project, the key to decreasing tensions between immigrants and native-born groups is to find a set of common goals and work collaboratively together toward achievable objectives in local neighborhoods and communities. Other new initiatives from the Ford Foundation wisely suggest explicit efforts to address inter-ethnic tensions as part of an adult basic skills curriculum.

The recommendation to proactively become involved in promoting community involvement and participation in community decision-making may perhaps be controversial but it stems directly and inevitably from the study findings that LEP adults feel themselves to be disenfranchised. Although we are in the middle of a major naturalization campaign in California, there has not yet been time to look beyond the immediate "technical" exigencies of moving legal permanent residents through the naturalization process to the crucial long-term question of forging a convivial and stable multi-ethnic society.

The key role to be played by adult education in this regard relates to developing the SCANS-linked competencies in the areas of "understanding systems", "negotiating", communicating, debating, discussing, and analyzing information to make LEP adults life in California, truly socially engaged. We heard repeatedly from LEP adults that it was appropriate to expect such participation but we also heard that few knew where to start or what to do.

Ideally a campaign focusing on building LEP adults' skills foundation for participating in the democratic process might involve a wide range of partners. These might include state agencies such as the Secretary of State, the Department of Economic Opportunity (which has historically been involved in promoting empowerment among low-income communities), immigrant advocacy groups such as the Northern California Coalition for Immigrant Rights (NCCIR) and CHIRLA, non-profit groups such as the California League of Women Voters, institutions such as the University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges, private foundations and business. Here too, the California Commission on Improving the Quality of Life Through Service might play a valuable role as catalyst and partner in collaborative efforts to increase civic participation.

Additional resources to support such efforts might be available from the Open Society Institute of the Soros Foundation which has embarked on a major efforts to foster

legal and social equity for immigrants through the Emma Lazarus Fund. A major focus of the Institute's efforts has been to promote the social conditions which foster an "open" democratic society. Soros' writings clearly show his sensitivity to the need for "high performance" skills in acquiring and analyzing information, dialogue and debate on pressing issues, and new and innovative approaches to make the ideal model of democracy a truly functional one in contemporary society.

Recommendation 20. ***Initiate research on the viability of strategies for moving toward performance-based accountability linked to learner outcomes, using multiple SCANS-linked outcome measures designed to capture skills development in any of the major domains, with a particular emphasis on improved strategies for assessing English-language competency in the context of a wide range of social interactions***.

Adoption of this recommendation would constitute a major step forward in proactively addressing the concrete issues linked to the current policy direction of performance-based accountability. Currently-available assessment systems are, for reasons detailed in **Chapter 4** of this report, not optimal as a foundation for creating a learner-based system of accountability based on demonstrable program impacts in building individuals' skills repertoire across all major functional domains.

It is beyond the scope of this report to recommend a specific strategy for performance-based accountability. What can be said within the scope of this study is that a system driven by "richer", more diverse measures of student assessment, progress, and accomplishment are important elements in improving the quality of services available to LEP adults. Moreover, it is important to re-emphasize the observation made in connection with **Recommendation 5** that efforts to improve assessment of outcomes must be affordable.

This recommendation does suggest at least a strategic framework for addressing the assessment issue. This framework would presume that the type of assessment system to be used would include multiple measures of adult learner's progress and that LEP adults' progress would specifically not be reduced to a unidmensional measure of English-language proficiency.

Recommendation 21. ***Initiate collaborative inter-agency research on the determinants of program effectiveness in the context of welfare-to-work program designs adapted specifically to the needs of LEP adults.***

A central problem with respect to implementing the "welfare reform" provisions of Public Law 104-193 is that there is no solid research evidence indicating that the legislative framework of sanctions and incentives to move public assistance recipients off welfare and into work will actually work. This consideration is central to the problems faced by legal permanent immigrants who are specifically excluded (however, with important exceptions) from Food Stamp and SSI eligibility.

The findings of this report suggest that, in actuality, welfare reform cannot work until there are effective strategies to build educationally disadvantaged adults' "foundation skills" for responding to the demands of managing their lives and pursuing careers in an increasingly stressful environment. Without effective strategies for building "high performance" skills, the legislative framework of strengthened incentives and punitive prohibitions has little hope of achieving its core goal of "ending welfare as we know it".

Inter-agency research efforts would do well to give careful attention to the issue of basic skills development as it appears that the assumptions implicit in the design of GAIN led to particularly ineffective service design because of the requirement that basic skills needed to be remediated before entering vocational training (as opposed to concurrently). We heard clearly from the only group of LEP adults in the current study involved in GAIN, Hmong focus group discussants, that it was not working for them. This is certainly the consensus among informed service providers and case managers working with refugee communities. This, then, makes it important to ask, "What will work for building a foundation of basic skills for subsequent employability?" Available research relevant to this question certainly suggests that what works for LEP adults may be different than what works for native-born public assistance recipients.

In connection with applied research to improve system responsiveness to LEP adults within the context of welfare reform, priority should be given to exploration of multi-stranded program designs which combine several concurrent activities to achieve maximum effectiveness and to the question of "preventive" services designed to keep

"working poor" LEP adults who are seasonally unemployed or employed in high-turnover low-wage occupations from needing to rely on Food Stamps or TANF.

An effective research strategy would need to be linked to the approaches taken by California in implementing TANF in general and, specifically, to the provisions which emerge with respect to immigrants, both legal permanent immigrants and unauthorized immigrants.

Conclusion

Our presentation of these recommendations of potential initiatives to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of adult education services for limited English adults concludes with a tabular display of the types of impacts which might be expected from implementation of the recommendations. The framework for describing and assessing impacts is that used in the California Strategic Plan for Education. Thus, the impact of each recommendation is projected as "low", "moderate", or "high" in relation to the four major strategic plan objectives: improvement of service quality, improved access to service, increased service provider accountability, and implementation of collaborative planning and service coordination.

Chart 1
Potential Impacts on LEP Adults From Implementing Recommendations

Recommendation	Improve e Service Quality and Responsiveness	Improve Access to Users	Improve Accountability	Improve Planning and Coordination
Resource Mobilization and Allocation				
1. Rationalize and realign state apportionment funding for adult education	Low	High	Moderate	Moderate
2. Develop funding incentives to encourage leveraging of matching support by providers	Moderate	High	Low	High
3. Enhanced funding for priority service objectives--improved assessment and counseling, intensive ESL, post-program coaching	High	Low	High	Moderate
4. Refine procedures for special ESL/Citizenship funding	Moderate	High	Moderate	High
5. Funding incentives to encourage diversification and innovation in the menu of adult learning modalities	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Program Mission, Guidelines, and Accountability				
6. Revise 10 authorized areas to establish a "comprehensive basic skills" designation for programs which target skills development in multiple areas (e.g. ESL+ABE)	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate
7. Develop and disseminate program guidelines for individual education plans (IEP's)	High	Low	High	Low
8. Develop and disseminate guidelines on "learning to learn" and managing self-directed learning	High	High	High	Moderate
9. Develop and disseminate guidelines on post-program "coaching" and follow-up support for continued self-directed learning	High	Moderate	Moderate	High
10. Develop and disseminate guidelines on local "micro-planning" to respond to the special needs of priority LEP sub-groups	High	Low	High	Moderate
11. Reassess the ESL Model Program Standards and revise standards	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low
12. Develop and disseminate Model Program Standards for "comprehensive basic skills" instruction	High	Low	High	Low

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Chart 1 (continued)
Potential Impacts on LEP Adults
From Implementing Recommendations

Recommendation	Improve e Service Quality and Responsiveness	Improve Access to Users	Improve Accountability	Improve Planning and Coordination
Staff and Organizational Development				
13. Increase funding support for staff development activities to improve service quality for LEP adults	Moderate	Low	Low	Low
14. Reconfigure ESL Institute staff development plan to address lifelong learning issues in serving LEP adults	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
15. Develop and disseminate guidelines to promote -comprehensive program design and delivery	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Research, Planning, and Collaborative Service Delivery				
16. Explore multi-agency collaboration to develop improved data on LEP adults and effective service design	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
17. Improved state-level coordination within CDE and local-level collaboration within K-12 system to promote multi-stranded family-centered programs serving LEP families	Moderate	High	High	High
18. Develop T/A and resource materials to support local level planning	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
19. Explore collaborative multi-agency campaign to promote LEP adults' participation in community problem-solving and decision-making	High	Low	Moderate	High
20. Initiate research on strategies for outcome-linked performance-based accountability using multiple SCANS-linked measures to assess impact	Moderate	Low	High	Low
21. Initiate collaborative multi-agency research to explore optimal adult education strategies for developing skills in the environment of welfare reform implementation	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High

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Appendix 1

Limitations of Data Sources Used for Estimates of LEP Service Population and for Estimates of Naturalization Applicants

In this Appendix we describe the limitations of the data used to generate information on LEP adults in need of adult education services and the data used for estimating numbers of naturalization applicants potentially needing ESL/Citizenship services from adult education providers.

Limitations of the Public-Use Microdata Set (PUMS)

While the 1990 PUMS is virtually the only source of systematic data on limited-English persons needing adult education services which has geographic detail, it has some serious limitations. The most serious limitation stems from the fact that the decennial census relies primarily on an English-language mail survey to enumerate persons. While the techniques for follow-up on the "long-form" sample households used to generate the PUMS are superior to those in the 100% sample, they also result in a serious undercount.[1]

A-1 Adjustments for Census Omissions

While it has long been known that there is a differential undercount of ethnic minorities, new models of census undercount indicate that ethnicity, household structure, English-language proficiency, educational attainment, type of housing unit, and neighborhood characteristics interact to give rise to census omission. Using a high-quality regression model developed on data collected in census undercount studies

[1] While follow-up is better, form length has been shown to be directly related to census mailout-mailback non-response and, subsequently, to the likelihood of eventual census omission.

conducted in association with the 1986 Los Angeles census test, it has been shown that the PUMS is likely to omit about half of at least one sub-population of limited-English low-education adults -- California farmworkers.[2] Observed census omission rates on single relevant variables (e.g. "unusual" housing, limited-English, "complex" household structure) fall into the 10-20% range, but it is likely that interactions among these variables for the overall LEP population in need of adult education services result in a somewhat higher undercount. These considerations have led us to "ballpark" the overall census undercount of the LEP adult education service population at 15%.

Because census undercount is highly sensitive to interaction among multiple variables relating to population socioeconomic characteristics (particularly housing arrangements) it is extremely difficult (although possible in principle) to estimate the LEP undercount at the county level.[3] Moreover, it has been demonstrated in the course of a series of ethnographic census coverage evaluation studies that undercount, while high amongst both Asian and Latino minorities, varies substantially from community to community and even within very similar communities.[4]

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[2] See Susan Gabbard, Edward Kissam, and Philip Martin, "The Impact of Migrant Travel Patterns on the Undercount of Hispanic Farmworkers" in **Proceedings of the 1993 Research Conference on Undercounted Ethnic Populations**, Bureau of the Census, 1994. This analysis tested two variants of the multi-variate regression model of census undercount developed by David Fein with a farmworker demographic and socioeconomic profile based on National Agricultural Worker Survey (NAWS) data. The meta-analysis in this paper shows that the census omission rate predicted by the models (48% for Model V and 52% for Model VI) is consistent with alternative estimates of farmworker numbers in California.

[3] Model specifications can be found in Fein's unpublished dissertation, David Fein, "The Social Sources of Census Omission: Racial and ethnic differences in omission rates in recent U.S. Censuses", Princeton University, 1989.

[4] A very good discussion is presented in Manuel de La Puente, "Why are people missed or erroneously included by the Census: a summary of findings from ethnographic coverage reports", in **Proceedings of the 1993 Research Conference on Undercounted Ethnic Populations**, Bureau of the Census,1994. Relevant studies address the undercount of the following language minority groups: Cambodians, Koreans, Mexicans, and Guatemalans. Several of the studies relate directly to undercount in California communities -- Cambodians in Long Beach (Bunte and Joseph, 1992), Koreans in Los Angeles (Kim,

Because some counties may contain more serious "pockets" of census undercount than others, we believe the LEP undercount rate these counties may be as high as 30% in some of these counties and as low as 10% in others. There is probably greater undercount in the counties with a higher prevalence of LEP adults and less undercount in the counties with a lower prevalence of LEP adults because in the areas with less dense immigrant settlement there is less difficulty enumerating LEP adults.[5]

In summary, census undercount has important implications for systematic planning of educational services for limited-English adults. From the resource allocation perspective, the most immediate implication of census undercount for California is that the disproportionate census undercount of low-education limited-English adults results in an inequitable distribution of federal funding resources for adult education. Federal funding for adult education under the Adult Education Act is driven by a formula which allocates each state funding on the basis of its relative share of out-of-school non-high school graduates.[6]

The likely impact of census undercount of LEP adults on Adult Education Act funding for California can be roughly estimated as a function of the shift in the $29 million funding (1994-1995) received by California which might have been received if California's limited-English population in need of adult education services had been counted at least as well as its native-born English speaking population with less than a

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1991), Mexicans in Guadalupe (Garcia, 1992), Mexicans and Salvadorans in San Francisco (Romero, 1992), Mexicans in San Diego (Velasco, 1992).

[5] Difficulties in enumeration are known to generate a cascade of operational problems in census operations as low mail-return areas become swamped in the course of followup enumeration. Variations in undercount among the already-marginalized low-education limited-English population is likely to stem primarily from differences in housing arrangements (prevalence of "unusual" housing units, "complex" large households) and immigration flows. Consequently, the highest undercounts are likely to be in the most active migrant-receiving areas of California with less undercount in secondary migration areas where housing conditions are better. For discussion of community indices of undercount, see Ed Kissam, "2000 Census Advisory Committee Position Paper Submitted by Member Organization CRLA on Behalf of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers", May, 1996.

[6] Section 313, P.L. 100-297 as Amended by P.L. 102-73.

high school diploma. A ballpark estimate is that the uncounted 270,000 LEP adult education "eligible" adults (i.e. 16 years of age, "out of school", less than a high school diploma or equivalent) could have generated about $1.6 million in additional federal funding for California adult education services had the U.S. Department of Education distributed funds on the basis of "best estimates" as opposed to unadjusted census data.

A-2 Uncertainties Regarding LEP Persons Enrolled in Adult Education Programs

The data presented in this section of the report look at the limited-English population presumed to be in need of adult basic education services, irrespective of whether they had, in fact, participated in an adult education program in the base year -- 1990. Thus, it is important to understand that these data do not depict a "universe of need" as usually defined in other program planning contexts.

The wording of the census questionnaire is not likely to have achieved great accuracy in eliciting accurate information as to whether census respondents were currently enrolled in an adult education program. The relevant question (Q. 11) asks whether persons in the household have "attended regular school or college". Additional instructions state that the respondent should only include "nursery school, kindergarten, elementary school, and schooling which leads to a high school diploma or degree". Thus, in census terms, the proper response to Q. 11 is undeterminable for, at least, ESL enrollees and enrollees in community college non-credit courses as the criterion "regular school" conflicts the specified set of enrollments to be included

In our analysis of PUMS data we excluded persons who stated that they were "in school" and, therefore, have a limited basis for determining what proportion of the total limited-English population in need of services might have actually been receiving ESL or

other non-credit services in 1990. CDE enrollment data suggest that as many as 700,000 limited-English proficient adults may be served by the adult education system each year.[8] This is, however, a very high number which is likely to include a substantial degree of duplication (as a student re-enrolls in another course). As noted in our discussion of universe of need we estimate about 180,000 were enrolled in an adult learning program in March, 1990 and responded positively to Q. 11 on the census about attending "regular school" and, thus, false negatives from the estimated "universe of need" by our use of the out-of-school criterion.

A-3 Uncertainties regarding data on Language Spoken

There are both sampling and non-sampling errors associated with the county-by-county data on LEP sub-populations composed of different ethnic minorities. Non-sampling errors are a cause for concern as the extent of undercount varies among ethnic groups in ways which are not entirely understood. For example, the census undercount of Cambodians is known to be much more serious than the undercount of Koreans. Since English-language ability and educational attainment appear to interact in determining the seriousness of census undercount of different language-minority groups we believe that the estimates for each language group are particularly low for groups such as the Hmong.

For the smaller rural counties, the standard errors relative to the nominal value of each language-minority among the adult education target population are extremely large

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[7] While all states may have a census undercount of the LEP adult education population, the problem is likely to be most serious in areas with a high prevalence of low-education LEP adults, rural California and rural Florida.

[8] CDE data show approximately 800,000 ESL enrollees. However, there is a relatively small but significant proportion of LEP persons who may be enrolled in some program other than ESL (e.g. GED, ABE) and, at the same time, there is likely to be substantial duplication as persons re-enroll in an adult education program after moving.

relative to the population size. This affects the confidence interval for the nominal values used in the thematic maps in the **Map 1-3 Series** (Distribution by Language) primarily.[9]

A-4 Uncertainties regarding the estimation of "At-Risk" Workers

The PUMS data are likely to understate the full range of "at risk" workers as our analysis rests on identifying persons who had, in fact, already experienced some degree of employment instability -- as evidenced by relatively high levels of unemployment during the year. In fact, workers in many immigrant-dominated sectors of the labor market are at higher than average risk of layoff even if they have been employed full-time during the preceding year. This is because the industrial sectors which rely most heavily on limited-English immigrants with little schooling are particularly volatile due to changes in market conditions (e.g. in garment manufacturing), manufacturing technology (e.g. electronics), and seasonal fluctuations in weather (e.g. agriculture, tourism). Thus the estimate of numbers of "at risk" LEP workers is a very conservative one.

Quality Issues and Analytic Uncertainties in Connection with the Estimate of Naturalization Applicants and potential Citizenship/ESL Demand

The 1990 baseline data on numbers of foreign-born persons, and the proportions of whom were already naturalized in 1990, proportions who were LPR's, refugees, and asylees are from analyses by Michael Fix and Jeffrey Passel of the Urban Institute.[10] However, our estimates adjust the total estimate of the California foreign-born population upward by 10% to account for census undercount while, at the same time, we use a slightly higher estimate of undocumented foreign-born persons, developed by

[9] For example, the unadjusted standard error for a cell size of 1,000 persons in a geographical area with 100,000 persons or less is 140, i.e. 14%. Detailed information on the statistical constraints on analysis of the PUMS data can be found in Chapter 3 of the PUMS documentation "Accuracy of the Microdata Sample Estimates".

[10] Fix and Passel, 1994.

Robert Warren of the INS.[11] The estimate of the proportion of LPR's who are children is based on the California Research Bureau's analysis of 1990 census data.[12] Minor adjustments for numbers of immigrants receiving LPR status and LPR's receiving citizenship status between census day 1990 and the end of 1990 are extrapolated from data for the full year. Other minor adjustments for post-1990 deaths of LPR's are from the work of Robert Warren and Barry Edmonston.[13] Data on post-1990 legalizations and naturalizations are from diverse sources.[14] These estimates do not take into account naturalizations during the fourth quarter of 1996 (which are likely to be substantial but for which data are not yet available); therefore, the universe of need may, subsequently, need to be adjusted downward.

Because English proficiency, citizenship status, and detailed information on legal status must be estimated from different sources, projected forward from 1990 through 1996, and cross-tabulated, it is very difficult to assess the accuracy of the estimate of ESL-citizenship service demand. At the same time, the estimate is not biased; this is, the estimate was developed so that potential biases might offset each other (e.g. by using a high estimate of census undercount together with a high estimate of unauthorized immigrants living in California).[15] Definitive estimates are feasible using regression modeling to fine-tune estimates of census undercount in relation to length of time in California, English-language ability, educational attainment, and measures of ethnic enclosure. This detailed examination of the issue is beyond the scope of this study.

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[11] Warren, 1994

[12] Johnson, 1993.

[13] Warren and Edmonston, 1993

[14] Fix and Passel, 1994; unpublished tabulations, INS, 1996; Commission on Immigration Reform, 1994.

[15] An important uncertainty relates to the numbers of SAWs who remain as California residents and the number as some proportion of this group were target earners who have returned to settle in Mexico. This uncertainty is not, however, likely to affect the final estimate by more than 5-10%.

Appendix 2

Study Procedures: SSHS and Focus Groups

1. Sampling Design for the Spanish-Speaking Household Survey (SSHS) and Survey Process

The sampling design used for the SSHS is a multi-stage one. The first stage of sampling consisted of purposively selecting three case study communities. The second stage, household selection, was, itself, a two-stage process, consisting of random selection of census block groups which met selection criteria, generation of random "starting points" within the selected blocks, and selection of eligible households using a pre-determined procedure. The final step consisted of selection of an eligible SSHS respondent within each qualifying household.

Community Selection

The SSHS was conducted in three case study communities purposively selected to represent three strata of communities where limited-English-proficient Spanish-speaking adults are concentrated -- urban southern California, rural central California, and urban northern California. An additional criterion for community selection were: that there was an adult school serving the community (since we did not have the resources to include in the sample a stratum of "totally unserved" communities").

Household Selection

The sampling frame for census block groups in the three case study communities was the 1990 census data (STF 3A). A condition for listing a block group was that it lay entirely within the community boundaries. This, therefore, excluded portions of the communities in block groups which straddled more than one community.

For Long Beach, community boundaries were defined as the Long Beach city limits (excluding Signal Hill which is entirely contained within the City of Long Beach. For Redwood City, community boundaries were defined as the Redwood City/Fair Oaks area, thereby including several blocks in the Fair Oaks area which are outside the Redwood City limits but which are considered part of the Spanish-speaking community of Redwood City. In Sanger, community boundaries were considered to be the Sanger city limits.

Criteria for census block group listing required that, in order to be chosen, a block group needed achieve a threshold density where at least 50% of the households listed in the STF-3A were listed as being Hispanic and limited-English. This was necessary to achieve enough operational efficiency to complete the SSHS within the very limited time frame available to the study -- four weeks.[1] Six block groups were randomly selected from qualified block groups in each community. Six block centroids within each of the randomly selected block group were then randomly chosen. To be chosen a block centroid needed to have at least a 50% density of Hispanic households (household language status is not available at this level of census geography). Then, a "starting point" was generated within each block centroid and mapped onto a street map of the community This process, thus, yielded 36 "starting points" for each community where a "starting point" consisted of a street intersection.

Household selection was then accomplished by contacting every third household along a vector chosen randomly for each staring point, e.g., "west on 10th St." Interviewers then were required to contact every third household along that vector, until they had contacted three SSHS-eligible households (i.e. households with at least one Spanish-speaking adult 16 years of age or older and not in high school) for each "starting point". If the target quota of three households was not reached along the initial vector (which it often was not since the actual density of Spanish-speaking households could

vary from the centroid mean), then interviewers were required to return to the starting point, turn 90 degrees left and begin walking a new vector (e.g. north on Acacia). Interviewers were required to stop at the boundary of the block group if they had not found three Spanish-speaking LEP households along the vector.

In cases where a "starting point" did not yield the quota of three SSHS-eligible households, an additional replacement starting point was randomly selected from the pool of qualified centroids, until achieving the target of 18 interviews for each of the six selected block groups in each community (108 interviews per community). As it turned out, the density of LEP households "on the ground" was slightly lower than we had projected and eventually all the qualified centroid starting points were used in Sanger and in Long Beach and all except for three were used in Redwood City.[2] After all the qualified centroid starting points in Sanger were exhausted, three additional starting points were in a small neighborhood at the eastern edge of Sanger which we believed had not existed in 1990 but which now was densely settled by LEP adults.

Time constraints did not permit us to achieve the target of 108 SSHS interviews as it was necessary to wind up the SSHS field survey work in time to enter data and do data analysis and the interview process was arbitrarily truncated on November 10. The final tally of completed interviews was: 97 in Redwood City, 83 in Sanger, and 80 in Long Beach. Despite the truncation of the interview process we believe the final survey sample is highly representative of the actual population of Spanish-speaking LEP adults in the case study communities, except that the sample includes more women than men. All of the SSHS respondents except one in Long Beach (a Filipina) are Latino.

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[1] Actual survey field operations eventually lasted two and one-half months, beginning on August 20, 1996 and continuing through November 10, 1996.

[2] Lower-than-expected densities appear to have been the result of stretches of street which were not residential in Long Beach and, in Sanger, a higher number of bilingual households than expected.

Interviewee Selection

After a household was selected on the basis of an initial screening questions to determine if at least someone in the household was a Spanish-speaking eligible LEP (i.e. at least 16 years old, not in high school, limited by speaking, reading or writing English "not well" or "not at all"), interviewers generated a household roster in a short interview with the person who had answered the door. Once the household roster had been generated, the number of eligible potential respondents was tallied and a potential interviewee was randomly selected. Because of time constraints, we allowed interviewers to substitute a randomly chosen alternate interviewee in the household if the original randomly selected LEP interviewee was not available. Interviewers made appointments and returned, if necessary, to interview respondents who were selected but could not do an interview at the point of initial contact.

Interview Procedures

Interviews took from 45 minutes to 2 hours. The interview process was designed to encourage survey respondents to add comments and narrative in addition to their summary response to each survey question. All interviewers spoke Spanish as their first language, although three were bilingual in English and Spanish. The survey instrument used is appended in **Appendix 4**. Maps of the residential patterns of Spanish-speaking households in each community are incorporated in this appendix. Additional details on household sampling can be found in **Table A3-1** on the next page.

Table A3-1
Details on Household Sampling -- SSHS

	Long Beach	Redwood City	Sanger
# QualifiedBlock Groups	24	9	6
#Sampled Block Groups	6	6	6
# Qualified Block Centroids in Sample Block Groups	34	53	83
# Problem Block Groups	1	0	0
# Below criterion density Block Centroids	3	4	2
# Reserve Block Groups used	1	0	1

In Long Beach , there was one problem BG, no qualifying households (all industrial)
In Long Beach, there were only 3 qualifying BC's in 1 BG

In Sanger, there were 2 problem BC's in 1 BG. They were below criterion density Hispanic (45%, 45%).
Also, 1 quasi- BG with 3 quasi BC's was added (post-1990 area of new immigrants)

In Redwood City, there were 3 problem BC's in 1 BG. They were below criterion density of Hispanic (41%, 42%, 47%). There was 1 problem BC in another BG, there was no alternative BC so only 5 were used. There was 1 problem BC in another BG. It was below criterion density (20%).

2. LEP Focus Groups

Focus groups were scheduled for out-of-school and in-school LEP adults in each community to gain perspective on the needs of selected LEP groups who spoke a language other than Spanish -- Cambodians in Long Beach (the largest non-Spanish-speaking LEP groups in the community), Hmong in Fresno (the largest non-Spanish-speaking LEP group in the Sanger area), and Vietnamese in Redwood City (the largest non-Spanish-speaking LEP group in the community). Time constraints on the study did not, eventually, permit us to conduct the Vietnamese focus group. Latino focus groups were also scheduled in each community to provide additional depth to the findings from the SSHS. Thus, the field research included 12 LEP focus groups -- 6 in-school and 6 out-of-school.

In-school focus group participants were recruited purposively from currently enrolled LEP students at the adult school in each community -- Long Beach Adult School, Sequoia Adult School, Sanger High School. Since Sanger's LEP population is predominantly Latino, Hmong were recruited from the Fresno Adult School program. Focus group recruiters screened and invited focus group participants in an effort to represent as best possible with approximately 10 individuals a cross-section of the LEP community in terms of gender, age, educational attainment, and recency of arrival in the U.S. Screening data on focus group participants indicate this process was successful. Similar procedures were used for recruiting out-of-school focus group participants.

Focus groups were conducted in the LEP adults' native language by focus group leaders of their ethnicity and whose first language was that of the particular LEP group. The Cambodian and Hmong groups were conducted by local focus group leaders. The Latino focus groups were conducted by project staff from out of town. We planned slight over-recruitment for each group to achieve the target number of 10 persons in the event that prospective participants did not show up for the evening meeting.

Background information on the 10 focus groups is summarized in **Table A3-2** below.

Table A3-2
Composition of LEP Focus Groups

Focus Group	# Persons	Gender	Origin/ Schooling	Yrs. School	Age Range
1. Long Beach In-School Cambodian	10	6-Female 4-Male	8-Cambodia 2-U.S.	-------	18-58
2. Long Beach Out-of-School Cambodian	9	5 Female 4 Male	8-Cambodia 1-U.S.	1-None 2-Elem. 5-7-12 1-12+	30-57 yrs.
3. Long Beach In-School Latino	16	11 Female 5 Male	11 Mexico 2 El Salvador 2 Honduras 1 Nicaragua	2-None 4 Elem. 7 7-12 3 12+	22-53 yrs.
4. Long Beach Out-of-School Latino	10	6 Female 4 Male	9 Mexico 1 El Salvador	1-None 4 Elem. 4 7-12 1 12+	20-49 yrs.
5. Sanger In-School Latino	12	5 Female 7 Male	11 Mexico 1 MX-US	0-None 6 Elem. 6 7-12 0 12+	17-63 yrs.
6. Sanger Out-of-School Latino	10	2 Female 8 Male	10 Mexico	4-None 3 Elem. 2 7-12 0 12+	20-62
7. Fresno In-School Hmong	9	6 Female 3 Male	3 Laos 2 Thailand 4 U.S.	3-None 6 Elem. 0 7-12 0 12+	21-45 yrs.
8. Fresno Out-of-School Hmong	10	5 Female 5 Male	1 Laos 3 Thailand 6 U.S.	7-None 3 Elem. 0 7-12 0 12+	21-60 yrs.
9. Redwood City In-School Latino	10	6 Female 4 Male	8 Mexico 1 El Salvador 1 Guatemala	2-None 4 Elem. 7 10-12 3 12+	18-65 yrs.
10. Redwood City Out-of-School Latino	12	9 Female 3 Male	11 Mexico 1 MX-US		17-57 yrs.

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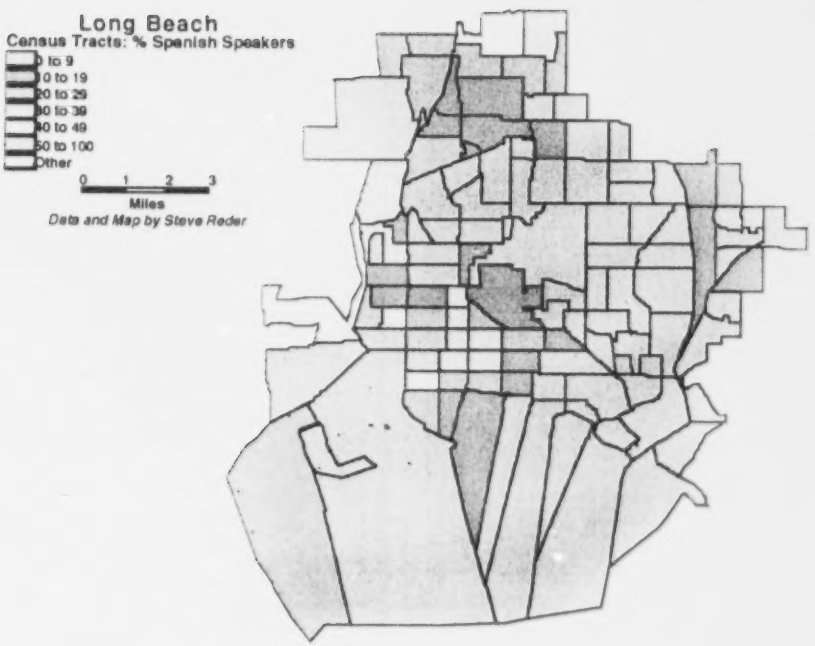
Appendix 3 -- Map 1

Density and Distribution of Spanish-Speaking Households
Long Beach



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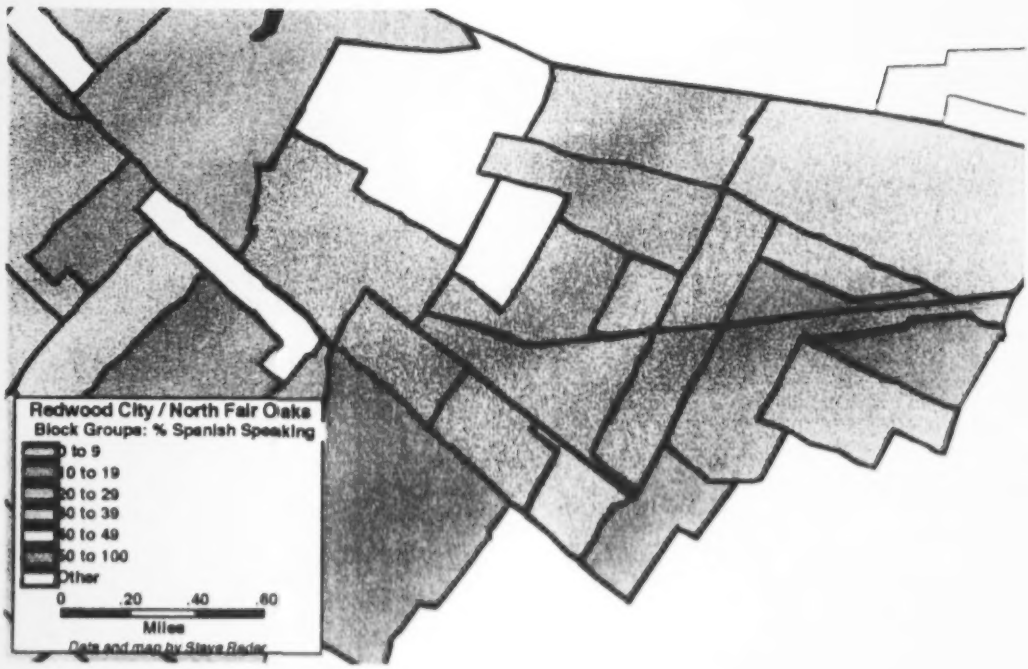
Appendix 3 -- Map 2

Density and Distribution of Spanish-Speaking Households
Redwood City



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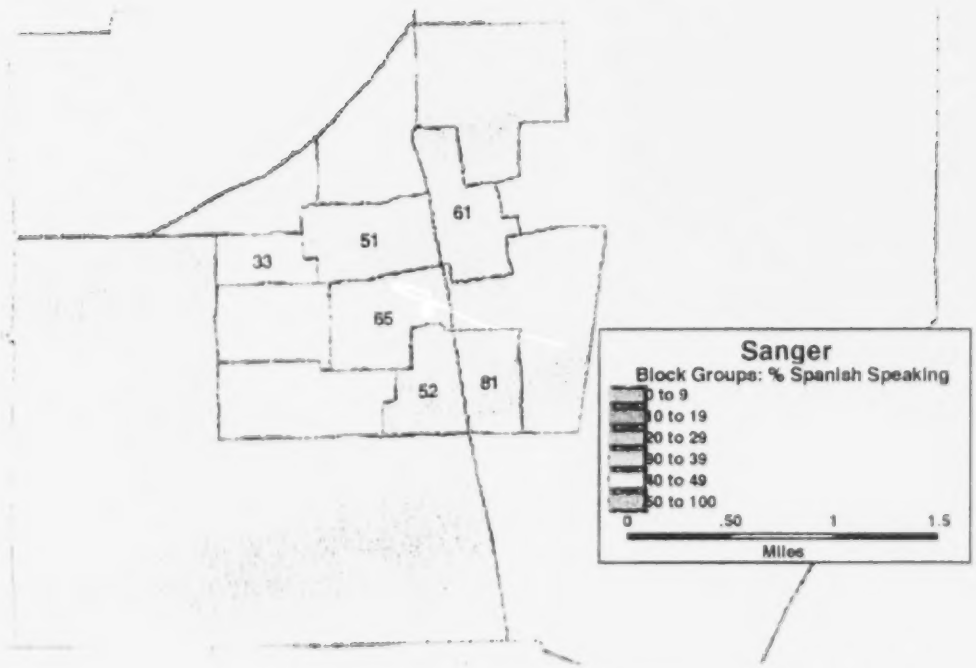
Appendix 3 -- Map 3

Density and Distribution of Spanish-Speaking Households
Sanger



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